A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES FOR P-12 ADMINISTRATORS IN UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS

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The Graduate School

Morehead State University

January 22, 2019

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Abstract of Capstone

A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the
College of Education
At Morehead State University

By

Danielle M. Curry

Pottsboro, Texas

Committee Chair: Dr. Shane Shope, Assistant Professor

Morehead, Kentucky

January 22, 2019

ABSTRACT OF CAPSTONE

A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES FOR P-12 ADMINISTRATORS IN UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS

Administrators need an easily accessible training resource for improving their underperforming schools that includes professional development and progressing monitoring tools for teachers, research-based interventions for students, and strategies to help their faculty and staff cope with the challenges of the school turnaround process. This professional development series for P-12 administrators teaches the innovative skills necessary to convert underperforming schools to a school where all students learn at high levels. Specifically, the training educates administrators on how to 1) create and sustain a culture of high achievement, 2) lead a guiding coalition through Professional Learning Communities, and 3) effectively implement a Response to Intervention framework that will help administrators reach goals toward higher achievement.

Specifically, P-12 administrators will learn a process for identifying the campus' current strengths, areas of improvement, and the strategies for cultivating a culture of high expectations for students and staff in order to turnaround their underperforming school. Administrators will develop their skills in taking an "all hands-on-deck" approach to creating an environment of collective responsibility and accountability for supporting students and creating change towards higher student achievement. P-12 administrators will also discover a practical implementation plan that creates time for intervention in the master schedule, explores ways to collect

data, and identifies the role the teachers have in matching interventions with students' needs.

KEYWORDS: Educational Leadership, Professional Development, Administrators, Underperforming Schools, Response to Intervention, Professional Learning Communities

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DEDICATION

This capstone publication is dedicated to my husband, Chase, and our two wonderful boys, Dax and Samuel. Thank you all for your encouragement, support, and sacrifice that has allowed me to stay focused and follow my dreams. I did it all for you. May all your dreams come true, too...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to the members of my doctoral committee. Thank you, Dr. Kevin Matthews for the time you've spent as my mentor. Thank you for coaching me through my earliest years of administration. Thank you, Dr. Shope for being my committee chair, and for your guidance through the superintendent coursework and the finalization of the capstone project. Thank you, Dr. Curry for always believing in me, guiding me to a project that I was passionate about, and for your accessibility throughout the entire program. I know that your knowledge and guidance allowed me to get the most out of the Ed.D program.

I want to thank my parents, Tammi and Doyle Roy for the lifetime of encouragement you have given me. You have always supported my passions, and I appreciate all the ballgames you attended, coached, and watched me coach. My competitive drive was inspired by you. Thank you for instilling in me hard work and ambition. Thank you so much for your willingness to help with the boys all the years I've been in school. Thank you to my brother and first best friend, Doyle Roy Jr. as well, for all the years of support.

Thanks to my in-laws, Monte and Marilyn Curry for all of the time you've spent helping with the boys, bringing meals, and being so supportive of my goals. Thank you for your strong testimonies and examples of Christ-like love that have inspired my spiritual growth.

Lastly, a special thank you to the wonderful faculty and staff at Pottsboro Elementary for their growth mindset, hard work, and continued commitment to our shared vision and mission for our campus.

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Executive Summary

Introduction to the Research

The research for this capstone began the moment I became a new administrator in an underperforming Title I elementary school in North Texas. The school demonstrated STAAR scores below the state average in Math, had no Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure in place, had no aligned curriculum and or assessments horizontally or vertically, Response to Intervention was used to place students in special education, the campus' special education population was three percent higher than the state average, the campus had no leadership team in place or framework established for building leadership capacity among staff, the campus' comprehensive needs assessment was out of compliance and completed by only one person, the master schedule did not maximize instruction, and there was no discipline plan or positive behavior system in place.

As an administrator in an underperforming school, it was vital that I implement a systematic process for addressing the underperformance of both teachers and students. This process involved establishing a clear vision and mission for the campus, improving collaboration among all staff, and implementing a RtI framework that included professional development and progress monitoring tools for teachers, and research-based interventions for students. Turning around an underperforming school requires a complete shift in mindset from traditional approaches to instruction and operations in public schools to a mindset founded in innovation, collaboration, and high expectations of achievement for all students. Therefore, P-12 administrators

need resources for developing their leadership skills when faced with leading an underperforming school.

Administrators in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade (P-12) have an obligation to provide all students access to an appropriate education. Appropriate education is different for each individual student's needs. Students in poverty with little access to early childhood educational settings, early literacy exposure, and a lack of research-based interventions in early grade-levels will develop with achievement gaps. Those gaps only get broader when they are not identified quickly and remediated with intervention, especially in math and reading, and as a result, students underperform. This is a similar situation for 49% of the students served on my campus as a first-year principal. Those students received limited exposure to early childhood education and were performing lower than their peers. As a result, the entire campus demonstrated low standardized test scores and was underperforming in writing and math.

This capstone, a professional development series for P-12 administrators, was created as a resource for new administrators to be initially shared in an eight-hour face-to-face training session. However, the hope is that the resources provided in the training can provide P-12 administrators with an on-going support system as they work through years of school improvement efforts. The initial training modules were piloted at the 2018 Texas Elementary Principal and Supervisors Associations (TEPSA) Conference in a training session among elementary administrators in Texas. After piloting, the design features were revised based on the feedback gathered from

participants in that session to shorten the training from a three-day session to a one-day session to best meet the requests of administrators that need to be on campus as much as possible.

According to Aldrich (2018), when it comes to the impact of school-related factors on student learning, research shows that school leaders are second in importance only to teachers. However, administrators' professional development has been limited to periodic workshops and trainings that focus mostly on administrative, operational, and compliance issues. They rarely receive ongoing, embedded coaching and problem-solving support based on the instructional needs of their specific school. The training modules within this capstone can be provided in a one-day session, but access to the materials within the training modules provide administrators access, at their convenience, to ongoing research-based frameworks and processes for improving their schools. Therefore, an overview of the revised training modules was presented in an hour face-to-face session at the Region 10 Innovate Principal's Conference in Richardson, Texas on October 2, 2018, to gather feedback on the effectiveness of the one-day training versus the three-day training. Principals agreed that this format was more accessible and effective.

The training modules are developed as a resource for all Texas leaders in the P-12 academic setting and will directly impact the success of teachers and students as they work to improve student achievement. The capstone aims to provide educational leaders with the information needed to overcome a culture of low achievement on their campus. The core of the capstone is three professional development modules

designed to support administrators in leading immediate change toward higher achievement. The training modules include: 1) creating and sustaining a culture of high achievement, 2) leading a guiding coalition through Professional Learning Communities, and 3) effectively implementing a Response to Intervention Framework.

Why This Work is Crucial to Administrators in Texas

The introduction of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2015) and the restructuring of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) forced necessary changes in the education system to support struggling students. ESSA updates the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) that provided funding for additional educational assistance for children in poverty in return for improvements in their academic progress. This academic progress is monitored through the adequate yearly progress measure that holds all public schools accountable for student achievement. ESSA maintains the law's federal accountability requirements and still tests students in third through eighth grade. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees students with a disability receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) that is individualized to meet their needs. Due to these federal and state accountability policies supporting ESSA and IDEA, school leaders are now more motivated to find systems that close achievement gaps and provide equity for all students.

Both ESSA and IDEA require schools to equalize the educational opportunities for all students, especially the students that are disadvantaged. This

restructuring of systems presented the need for underperforming schools to incorporate Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that improve teacher effectiveness, and Response to Intervention (RtI), which provides high-quality instruction and interventions that are specific to individual students' needs. Specifically, in the state of Texas, the number of Hispanic students surpassed the number of White students for the first time in the 2001-02 school year (TEA, 2003). In the 2016-17 school year, 59 percent of students were identified as economically disadvantaged. Minority students and students of lower socioeconomic status are likely to attend chronically low-performing and failing schools (Harris, 2010). The achievement gap between students who live in poverty and their on-level peers is an ongoing challenge for administrators that cannot be ignored.

In 2017, Texas had over 40 school districts that chronically failed the State's standards for five or more years, which indicates a large-scale demand for improvement in student achievement (Isenee, 2017). Texas public school districts and charter schools are held accountable for student achievement through an annual academic accountability rating system. The ratings are based largely on performance on state standardized tests and graduation rates. The ratings assess student achievement, student progress, efforts to close the achievement gap and postsecondary readiness. P-12 administrators are required to meet the standards set forth by the state and need the applicable skills to be successful. When schools underperform, the State has the right to order the implementation of interventions,

which includes evaluating, monitoring, and intervening with any campus and their district to improve the learning environment for all students in that district.

In addition to high-stakes testing and accountability, administrators are faced with the challenge of overcoming the many characteristics of an underperforming school, most of which are out of his or her control. Barton & Stepanek (2009) describes those characteristics to include: poverty, overcrowded classrooms, poorly-trained teachers, limited access to technology, limited resources, educators teaching outside their field or without certification, absenteeism, high dropout rates, low teacher expectations for students, culture issues regarding staff morale and low student performance, and high rates of principal turnover. According to Fullan (2007), administrators play one of the biggest roles in student success because they drive so many decisions at schools and are the key to sustaining academic success. Therefore, P-12 administrators need ongoing professional development resources to support their schools that are faced with great challenges, yet are held to the same standards as schools across the state with little or no characteristics of an underperforming school.

Administrators are frequently replaced at schools that fail to meet accountability standards, and unfortunately, principal turnover is remarkably high in the United States (Fuller, 2012). Only since 2009 has Texas been reporting data about administrator experience and demographics to the public about who is running their public schools. Research is beginning to track the tenure of administrators alongside test scores to identify any trends with administrators and school improvement.

Administrators in Texas rural public schools have the lowest years of experience and lowest median tenure in the state, which could play a significant role in why those districts are struggling to improve test scores (Ramsey, 2015). Having access to a professional development resource that addresses many of the characteristics of an underperforming school, administrators can gain the skills needed to convert their underperforming school to a school where all students learn at high levels, despite the experience level of the principal.

What makes this work different?

Texas Legislation endorses high accountability sanctions for schools and their administrators. New administrators need to know that The State Board of Education in Texas adopted new principal standards in 2016 to ensure that principal standards meet the rigor of the accountability system upheld by the legislature. Administrators need an updated approach to lead the change necessary to improve their low-performing school while meeting the requirements of the new principal evaluation system and the mandates from the state. The five new standards within the Texas Principal Evaluation Support System (TPESS) include 1) instructional leadership, 2) human capital, 3) executive leadership, 4) school culture and 5) strategic operations. The training modules within the capstone will be designed to integrate these five new standards within the learning modules to help administrators develop the skills required in each standard.

TPESS requires administrators to shift from a supervisor role to an instructional leader. A study conducted by Hammond and Orphanos (2007) indicated

that 90% of administrators feel that they lack adequate preparation to be strong instructional leaders. The study extended the assumption much of what is learned about being a principal happens on the job, over a considerable amount of time, which results in high principal turnover rates, especially in underperforming schools (Hammond & Orphanos, 2007). Further, in a national study of principal preparation programs, Lunenburg (2010) concluded that the programs' instructional designs are in isolation of the practical experiences that administrators have on the job. The disconnect with on-the-job experience and isolated professional development negatively impacts the principal's ability to lead effective change (Zeichner, 2010). To avoid principal turnover, training that connects on-the-job experiences with the theory beneath new practices will better prepare administrators to support teacher learning, hold teachers accountable, and go beyond any superficial changes to the school where reform is needed (Finnigan, 2012).

Therefore, the core of this capstone provides a professional development series designed around M. David Merrill's (2002) First Principles of Instruction for leaders in P-12 schools to help them successfully support teachers and instructional staff with the implementation of multiple frameworks that efficiently and effectively into their educational processes.

Why this is a Leadership Issue

P-12 administrators working to implement a framework on their campuses need support and training in order to improve student achievement and campus performance. My first year as administrator required knowledge and skills that I had

not yet gained just in the pre-service educational setting. Since leading schools is complex and complicated, leaders need adaptable skills that help them lead large-scale improvement efforts. Therefore, training administrators to become transformational leaders, will allow them to play a critical role in facilitating this change in school improvement. Transformational leaders understand the significance of the impact teacher motivation has on systematic changes, such as creating a shared vision, implementing PLCs, and creating and implementing a RtI model (Wright, 2012). Educational leaders should provide the instructional leadership necessary to implement school-wide change that improves student performance in low-performing schools and meet the accountability standards that greatly influence student learning (Conner, 1995).

As administrators develop the skills needed to improve teacher learning, schools will begin to see improved classroom instruction and higher student achievement (Vanblaere & Devos, 2016). As administrators improve culture and create a collaborative environment, teachers will learn from and with each other, and come to see themselves as a community of teachers who focus on the implementation of new ideas and practices tailored to their individual strengths and capacities, such that the familiar phrase ‘my students’ genuinely becomes ‘our students’ (Mundschenk & Fuchs, 2016). As teachers work together and use each other’s strengths to meet the needs of all students, significant gains in student achievement can occur.

Additionally, leaders must have the skills to address the reality of students living in poverty and how that impacts their academic achievement. For example,

students that live in poverty are directly impacted by the environment in which they live, which correlates to their academic performance and most often creates gaps in their achievement (Barton, 2003). To help overcome these gaps, students that are given a strong family support system at school, best practices in the classrooms, and support from community involvement will have their physical and emotional needs met, and they will be more likely to productively engage in academic achievement (Donovan, Galatowitsch, Hefferin, & Highland, 2013). This capstone project provides these same protections for students living in poverty, as well as any student that is at-risk for underperformance. The strong family support system comes from the idea that with a school-wide improvement plan, all students are a shared responsibility on campus. Homeroom or general education teachers are not the only staff members looking at a student's data and areas of academic weakness. All staff members play a role in working with students within the turnaround model to offer as many resources as possible to help close student achievement gaps.

Further, P-12 leaders must facilitate the best instructional practices for all students, starting in the classroom, with Tier 1 instruction. If Tier 1 instructional practices are not effective for these at-risk students, then instructional approaches become more specialized and individualized to meet the students' needs until they have mastered the targeted skill. At-risk students benefit the most from a collaborative campus and RtI model because it eliminates the inequality in education, and ensures that those students have equal access to high levels of education (Walker-Tileston, 2010). Therefore, the capstone impacts the effectiveness of the instructional

leader, which will improve teacher performance and in succession will directly support struggling students, especially those living in poverty.

Purpose

According to the Texas Principal Standards, P-12 administrators are expected to administer the instructional program that leads their campus toward improving teaching and learning. More than 20 years of school improvement research, starting with studies in the United States (Brookover et al., 1979; Edmonds, 1982) and the United Kingdom (Mortimore, 2000; Rutter et al., 1979; Southworth, 1995), emphasize that effective instructional leaders exercise a powerful influence on the school's capacity to implement reforms and improve students' levels of achievement. The current student achievement gaps that most underperforming schools are struggling to address can be attributed, in part, by the shortage of highly qualified administrators that are prepared to be effective instructional leaders (Burgess & Houf, 2017). Therefore, the purpose of this capstone is to offer training models as a resource that will shape P-12 administrators instructional leadership behaviors toward improving their underperforming schools.

Problem statement/Question to be answered

What training do administrators need to effectively lead their underperforming schools?

Literature Review

Research was conducted on the topic of developing principal capacity to lead school-wide instructional improvements. Three modules were developed for face-to-

face training to be used in a conference setting or by local districts that support administrators in underperforming schools. The first module supports the new administrator with a step-by-step guide to creating and sustaining a culture of high achievement in their underperforming campus or district. The guide models the process of creating a culture of collective responsibility among staff members, parents, and community members to assess the current needs of the campus with data, goal setting and progress monitoring systems.

The concepts of the training module are developed from the Four Essential Guiding Principles to Simplifying Response to Intervention (Buffum, Mattos, & Weber, 2012). Those four principles include 1) Collective Responsibility, 2) Concentrated Instruction, 3) Convergent Assessment, and 4) Certain Access. Once the needs are assessed, the committee works to set goals to address the needs of the campus. Facilitating the coalition, the principal works to create strategies that support the goals in order to create the change necessary for the campus to achieve higher levels of student performance.

The second module addresses the need for increased collaboration and ongoing professional development to improve teacher performance. The content of this module supports administrators in leading a campus-level guided coalition through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Administrators will receive training on up-to-date PLC information from Richard DuFour's PLC's at Work (2013). This work is designed to give stagnant PLCs fresh ideas for growth. It also supports new PLCs with a systematic approach to building a sustainable

infrastructure and communication process. The necessity of collaboration in a RtI model is best supported by PLCs. Professional Learning Communities began in the late 1980s when Susan Rosenholtz's study of 78 schools found "learning-enriched schools" were characterized by "collective commitments to student learning in collaborative settings" (AllthingsPLC, 2017). Rosenholtz's study further initiated the idea that teachers improve when they work in a collective effort rather than individually. Further, the study revealed that when teacher collaboration is linked to shared goals and focused on student achievement, then schools saw improved teacher learning, higher levels of teacher commitment and ultimately, greater gains in student achievement.

PLCs also provide opportunities for educators to influence student achievement through linking instructional practice, leadership, and the decision-making process. Dufour (2002) discovered that teachers who were supported in their learning and teaching practices were more effective than teachers who did not have a support network with peers. During this professional development time, teachers work collaboratively to target specific areas of student deficits and determine how avenues can be utilized through the PLC model to improve their current methodologies, curriculum deficiencies, and/or faculty inconsistencies in order to improve student target areas (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008). Additionally, the PLC model requires educators to incorporate this professional learning time to plan common assessments, common curriculum, and create goals specific to their students' needs. Administrators that successfully implement PLCs, in their purest form, can

drive the professional development of teachers in order to directly improve student learning and achievement (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2002).

As a reform tool in connection to a RtI model, PLCs provide opportunities for administrators to influence student achievement through collaboration on instructional practice, teacher leadership, and shared decision-making. For underperforming schools, this collaboration is key to providing individualized instruction where achievement gaps are evident. Schools that have significant differences in student achievement, should focus PLC meetings on including high standards with rigorous curriculum, qualified and experienced teachers, and orderly classrooms (Barton, 2003). PLCs can offer underperforming students access to a variety of instructional strategies including differentiated activities, data-driven instruction from universal screening assessments, and suggestions from specialists within the PLC to address significant deficits in academic achievement. Without effective PLCs, students are likely to miss those opportunities for rapid-response interventions that the RtI model provides, and eventually become eligible for special education services due to a lack of appropriate education (Walker, Emaunuel, Grive, Brawand, & McGahee, 2012).

Additionally, administrators that understand teachers' boundaries with time, their lack of training, and their diverse teacher perceptions know that additional support is necessary to sustain teacher effectiveness. Therefore, in order to stimulate collaborative activities and break down barriers to achieve goals in improving student performance, administrators should have a strong influence on the effectiveness of

PLCs for these specific areas (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). Strong leaders support PLCs by motivating teachers, providing training on IDEA policies, and fostering a school-wide commitment to reform; all of which will help their school improve student outcomes in low-performing schools (Finnigan, 2012).

PLCs are a powerful tool in changing the quality of education. PLCs require teachers to consistently renew their professional knowledge and skills and use those to improve instruction for all students. When paired with RtI, both systems provide transformational practices that link collaboration with improved instructional practices (Vanblaere & Devos, 2016). This occurs when PLCs ensure that valid decision making requires demonstration of the functional relationship between student responsiveness and exposure to the appropriate interventions (Duhon, Mesmer, Gregerson, & Witt, 2009). The implementation of RtI is greatly facilitated when teachers and staff see themselves as a Professional Learning Community. PLCs and RtI are effective when teachers work together as a Response to Intervention Team and provide tiered-level instruction in the classroom or embedded tutoring to meet students' individual learning needs.

Therefore, the third training module provides administrators with a framework for implementing a Response to Intervention program on their campus. The concepts within the RtI framework include the Eight Core Principles of RtI provided by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDE, 2006). Administrators will receive training on how these essential principles must guide their actions through the implementation process. Without the four Cs, "it is impossible for

a school to achieve high levels of learning for every child" (Buffum, Mattos & Weber's, p. 10, 2012).

Fuchs and Fuchs (2008) indicate that in order for the RtI framework to function effectively as an educational process to help all students with appropriate interventions, administrators must take on the role as the instructional leader and make informed and methodical decisions on the implementation and management of the school-wide RtI program. For administrators to make the RtI implementation successful, they should be trained through exposure to other successful programs, conferences, and workshops that provide resources, and have full support from central office (Hilton, 2007). This exposure to resources and support will be the guiding philosophy for the design of the third training module.

A key component to RtI is a collaborative culture on campus with the principal communicating the idea that all staff are responsible for assisting all students. Therefore, significant collaboration is necessary, and leaders must bring together both the general and special education teachers in order for the implementation process to be successful. In a study of RtI implementation, Putnam (2008) discovered that the variable with the single greatest impact on the success of the implementation process is the direction and guidance from administrators at both the campus and district level. Consequently, leaders must skillfully communicate the RtI framework, the process for implementation, the resources available, and the key elements of the multi-tiered system that will be used for instruction (Putnam, 2008).

Also, there should be some flexibility by administrators as staff forms a deep understanding of the change and addition of a new RtI program. However, there are some non-negotiable expectations that should be required by leaders that include using consistent universal screeners to identify areas of student misunderstandings, research-based interventions in a rapid response manner, and constant communication and feedback with students, parents, and school personnel. These contextual factors can make or break the RtI initiative and be fundamental learning objectives in the third module (Putnam, 2008).

P-12 Administrators play a vital role in the functional structure of the RtI process; they must be contributing members of the RtI team to provide guidance, supervision, resources and organization (Putnam, 2008). The need for leadership is not restricted to the initial implementation of RtI, but more importantly, for sustaining RtI practices (Burns & Ysseldyke, 2005). Administrators are responsible for promoting growth on their campus and building a culture where no one is left behind. Additionally, teachers need to be motivated, trained, and supported. They need to be incorporated into the decision-making process and given opportunities to collaborate with other teachers on sharing best practices and resources. Fullan (2007) emphasizes the extreme necessity of creating this motivation for teachers by allowing them to intervene early rather than waiting until kids reach the failing state.

Further, the administrator is responsible for providing a means of promoting the growth of the implementation effort, such as giving teachers time to meet together to discuss data and observe each other's practice in an effort to improve instruction

and strategies (Burns & Yesseldyke, 2005). Leaders with these support systems will find sustainability and effective implementation of the RtI process, which will directly impact the instructional practices, assessments, and interventions that have been proven effective and are the best match for students and their specific needs (Tilly, Harken, Robinson, & Kurns, 2008).

To address the characteristics of underperforming schools, administrators that have an intervention model such as RtI will see gains in student achievement and ensure that achievement gaps among students in poverty do not impede achievement in underperforming schools and perpetuate bigger gaps in learning outcomes (Barton, 2003). Especially for students in underperforming schools, RtI provides an individualized and tiered-level approach to meeting their academic needs before being misidentified as a student in need of special education services due to a learning disability (Walker-Tileston, 2011). According to Walker-Tileston (2010), when RtI is used effectively to help struggling students, schools "get it right the first time" for those students by placing them with the appropriate interventions needed to close achievement gaps before special education services are needed, low test scores affect accountability ratings, and administrators and teachers started to experience burn-out.

Instructional Design Strategy

This capstone and related strategies were selected due to the lack of published learning modules for administrators leading underperforming schools. RtI, PLCs and achievement gaps are heavily researched; however, there are very few guides for instructional leaders that connect all three concepts as a framework for school

improvement. The instructional design for this capstone is based on M. David Merrill's "First Principles of Instruction" (2002). Each training module is developed around Merrill's central principle of instruction, which is task-centered learning. The concept of task-centered learning is to identify a problem that represents a real-world situation. Learning objectives provide learners with problems that they will be able to solve at the end of the learning session. As participants progress through each learning objective or problem, their level of difficulty will increase in order to "scaffold the learning process into manageable tiers of difficulty" (Merrill, 2002).

Since administrators are faced with real-world problems in the field that directly impact staff and student achievement, the courses engage administrators with a progression of problems they will be able to solve after 1) engaging in a task-centered instructional strategy (real-world problem), 2) activating prior knowledge or experience, 3) observing a demonstration (teaching of the material), 4) applying the new knowledge (guided practice), and 5) integrating their new knowledge (transfer into their work) into their everyday world. These principles are important in the training module design because the participants learn to use strategies to work through a progression of problems that increase in difficulty but are scaffolded throughout the learning process in order to make the over tasks more manageable.

For example, The First Principle, task-centered problem, requires students to identify the needs on their campus or in their district. The overall purpose of the training is to help an administrator turnaround their underperforming campus. Therefore, identifying the areas of underperformance is vital to solving the overall

problems the administrator is facing. Administrators will use an example of a comprehensive needs assessment from a Title 1 elementary school to learn how to identify the data sources used to detect the needs of the campus and then to categorize the campus' needs into strengths, needs, and priorities for improvement. The comprehensive needs assessment was designed using Plan4Learning.com software that ensures all Title 1 Schoolwide Elements are included, and that all legal requirements under ESSA comply. Once the real-world problem is identified, participants will progress to the Second Principle: Activation.

Using the knowledge of the pseudo-campus' problems with underperformance, participants will then work as a small group to recall, relate, and describe their current campus' underperformance in order to activate their prior experiences and "create mental models upon which the new learning can build" (Merrill, 2010). This component of the training will provide the foundation for administrators to understand the association between the training and the work they are doing on their campus.

The Third Principle: Demonstration, will provide administrators with research-based strategies to address the needs of their underperforming schools. The first training module provides information on understanding the characteristics of underperforming schools and how to use Buffum, Mattos, and Weber's (2012) Four C's of intervention to gain the knowledge and skills to address those characteristics. The second module demonstrates how to create a guiding coalition through the use of Professional Learning Communities using Solution Tree's (2012) Learning by Doing

framework. Then, in the third module, the trainer will demonstrate the Eight Core Principles of Response to Intervention (2008) to enhance administrators' leadership skills as they learn to implement or improve their RtI process on their campuses. In each module, Demonstration will include direct teaching and sharing of reproducible activities and handouts that participants can take back to their campuses and use for their own training and implementation purposes.

The Fourth Principle: Application, will consist of participants working in small groups at their training tables to complete guided practice activities that focus on what was just demonstrated with the Third Principle. Activities within the training modules include, work in a small group to analyze a comprehensive needs assessment, complete a 4 C's (2012) analysis for the pseudo-campus, complete a Team Foundations (2012) handout for practice with completing a PLC implementation plan, and evaluating the pseudo-campus' Eight Core Principles (2008) of RtI. Once the groups have completed each activity, each module has time built in for participants to share their experiences as they worked to solve the real-world problems, as well receive feedback from the trainer on their performance within each activity.

The Fifth Principle: Integration, allows participants to integrate all of the new knowledge and skills learned in the first four principles, and create action plans to take back to their schools for immediate implementation. Administrators will have a better understanding of how to identify the needs of their underperforming campus to better target the interventions specific to those needs, and how to implement the

change process towards higher levels of academic achievement. The materials within each training module are researched-based and provided with permission from referenced sources.

Impact of the capstone

My campus profile where the strategies within the training modules were implemented has changed drastically. The campus now demonstrates the following performance improvements:

- The campus is most recently the only campus in the district that improved in all areas on the STAAR tests.
- Math STAAR scores increased by 5% two years in a row.
- The campus attendance rate improved by 1%.
- The campus' retention rate decreased by 2.5%
- The Special Education eligibility accuracy rate improved from 33% to 71%.

Further, teachers participated in an anonymous survey of their perceptions of how they felt the campus had improved since the implementation of the turnaround strategies. The following statements are a few of their responses to the survey.

- The campus is embracing PLCs and implementing RtI on a whole new level.
- I think PLCs and RtI will show to have benefitted the students tremendously.
- The RtI program now focuses on the students-genuinely helping them with whatever they need.
- Communication was a lot better this year!

- Big improvements were made in vertical alignment of curriculum and instructional practices.
- The campus has become much better with communicating among administrators and teachers, and among teachers within teams.
- Discipline has improved, and morale has seemed to improve also.
- Communication and PLC planning has ensured the best education for our elementary students.

The most significant impact is the additional resources new administrators have to support their work in creating positive change on their campus before they become overwhelmed, burned out, and the campus experiences principal turnover. Fuller (2012) examined the effects of principal turnover in Texas. The first school to be closed by the state for low performance was Johnston High School. Fuller found that before Johnston High School closed, it was led by 13 administrators in the 11 years. Emerging research also indicates that principal turnover negatively affects both school and student achievement and that the strongest impact appears immediately after principal turnover occurs (Miller, 2013).

Beyond my school district, my goal for this capstone is to help schools across the State avoid the significant negative impact that results when schools experience principal turnover. The capstone can be used in principal conferences across Texas to offer administrators solutions to the characteristics of underperforming schools aligned with the premise of Aldrich's (2018) theory that in order to improve schools, districts must start by coaching principals.

Limitations of the capstone

Limitations of this project vary from experience, instructional design, and location differences. As a principal of only four years at the time of this project, my experience limits the capstone to the length of my self-reported data. Being a leader at the same school for my entire principalship also creates demographic diversity limitations. However, the process of my own experience development has been focused on strategic, thoughtful, and best practices in educational leadership.

Further, the quality of a training module depends greatly on the instructional design method used. My lack of training and skill in instructional design is another notable limitation of the capstone. M. David Merrill's First Principles of Instruction (2002) was chosen as the instructional design model for the capstone due to its proven effectiveness among learners as they work through real-world educational problems until they develop the skills and knowledge needed to be successful educational leaders. Despite the project's research-based design model, administrators should be mindful that any time "school improvement depends on professional development as a primary means for implementing effective instructional practice requires deliberate attention to implementation fidelity" (Killion, 2016, p. 56). The implementation process for improving my campus began four years ago, and it continues to be an on-going work in progress. To achieve high levels of implementation, administrators should understand that reform must be diligently sustained over time.

The capstone is specific to educational leaders in the State of Texas. Specific to the Texas Principal Standards that are designed to improve school productivity, student achievement, and leadership capacity, the training modules reference the Texas standards-based evaluation system in order to align the needs of administrators in Texas to specific improvement strategies. Additionally, the modules use examples from pseudo-schools' student achievement data specific to both the Texas Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards for instruction and the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) standardized tests scores. The real-world problems built within the training modules are focused on the challenges rooted in the Texas education system, thus limiting the generalizability to other states and the challenges that their P-12 administrators face.

Reflections

Issues in education abound, thus making the decision to choose a capstone topic worthy of contributing to the academic conversation with my limited experience difficult. I wanted to ensure that my work would add to the systematic changes necessary for improvement in educational leadership. The opportunity that I have to share my experience as a P-12 leader in public education led to the decision to create something that reflected both my passion and talent to support other Texas leaders in the pursuit to make immediate and significant changes on their campuses. Consequently, emerged a project that would educate new administrators facing overwhelming challenges in public schools with research-based processes toward

higher achievement; not only for themselves but for all the staff and students they served within their stewardship.

As I reflect on my first year as an administrator in a position that required immediate change, I feel certain that had I had the training that this capstone provides, I would have been more successful earlier and had endured fewer obstacles in turning the campus around more effectively. I researched for hours, attended days of professional development, and read a multitude of educational resources in order to identify the solutions to address the lack of collaboration, accountability, and success all were experiencing on my campus. Along with my own experiences and self-created strategies toward school improvement, this capstone is a compilation of the research-based training and resources I implemented with the aligned evidence of large-scale school improvement experienced on my elementary campus.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Professional Development Agenda and Outline

Time	Agenda	Materials	Handout
8:00	Objectives Experiences Instructional Design Information	Slides 2-4	
8:10	Understanding the Characteristics of Underperforming Schools • Defined characteristics • Campus Analysis Activity	Slides 5-6	Handout #1: Characteristics of Underperforming Schools Analysis & Comprehensive Needs Assessment
8:15	Characteristics of Underperforming Schools Analysis Activity • Analysis Debrief • Evaluation summary of real campus • Barriers to change	Slides 7-12	
8:45	Setting the Stage for a Campus Restart	Slides 13-14	
9:20-9:30	**Break**		
9:30 	Developing a Culture of Collective Responsibility and High Achievement • Objective • Definitions Identifying the Problem • Campus Profile Activity	Slides 15-18	Handout #2: Summary Chart & Comprehensive Needs Assessment
10:00 	• Table Talk	Slide 19	
10:15 	• Four Cs Activity and Examples	Slides 20-31	
10:30 	Small group activity— • School data and the Four Cs worksheet with Whitten Elementary	Slide 32	Handout #3: 4Cs Evaluation for Whitten Elementary School
11:00 	Administrator's Action Plan: • Complete Four Cs worksheet on own school data	Slides 33	Handout #4: 4Cs Evaluation

11:30-12:00	**LUNCH BREAK**		
12:00 	Leading a Guiding Coalition Through Professional Learning Communities • Objectives • Definitions • Comprehensive Needs Assessment	Slides 36-38	
12:10 	Identifying the Problem • Campus Profile Activity for PLCs	Slide 39	
12:30 	Guiding Coalition Framework • Non-negotiables • Weekly meetings • Norms • Documentation and feedback • Data • Student-centered	Slides 40-42	Handout #5: Learning by Doing
1:00 	Small group activity— • Pseudo-school PLC implementation plan	Slide 43	Handout #6: Team Foundations
1:30 	Administrator's Action Plan: • Assess own school PLC model and compare with own school data • Create PLC action plan with Thinking Frame	Slide 44	Handout #7: Thinking Frame
2:00-2:10	**BREAK**		
2:10 	Effective Implementation of a Response to Intervention Framework • Objectives • Definitions • Comprehensive Needs Assessment	Slides 46-49	
2:20 	Activation: RtI Assessment • Current Reality • Challenge • Desired Reality	Slide 50	

2:30 	1. Eight Core Principles of Response to Intervention 2. 1. We can effectively teach all children. 3. 2. Intervene early. 4. 3. Use a multi-tier model of service delivery. 5. 4. Use a problem-solving model to make decisions within a multi-tier model. 6. 5. Use scientific, research-based validated intervention and instruction to the extent available. 7. 6. Monitor student progress to inform instruction. 8. 7. Use data to make decisions. A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RtI practices. 9. 8. Use assessment for screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.	Slides 51	
3:00 	Small Groups— Core Principles evaluation for Whitten Elementary School	Slide 52	Handout # 8: Eight Core Principles Evaluation
3:30-4:00 	Integration/Administrator's Action Plan: • Eight Core Principles evaluation for own school • Complete RtI Action Plan for implementation	Slide 53	Handout # 9: Eight Core Principles Evaluation for personal campus

Appendix B: Professional Development Presentation and Trainer Notes

A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES FOR NEW ADMINISTRATORS IN UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS

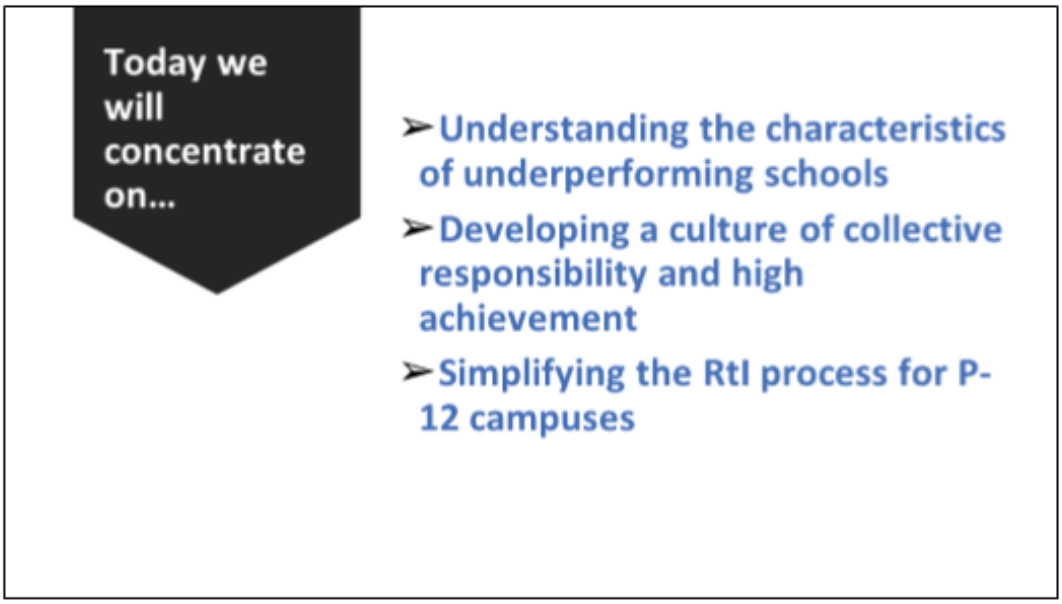
Training Manual
Full Day

Training Goals:

The training is designed to provide educational leaders with the information needed to overcome a culture of low achievement on their campus. Three professional development modules support administrators in leading immediate change toward higher achievement.

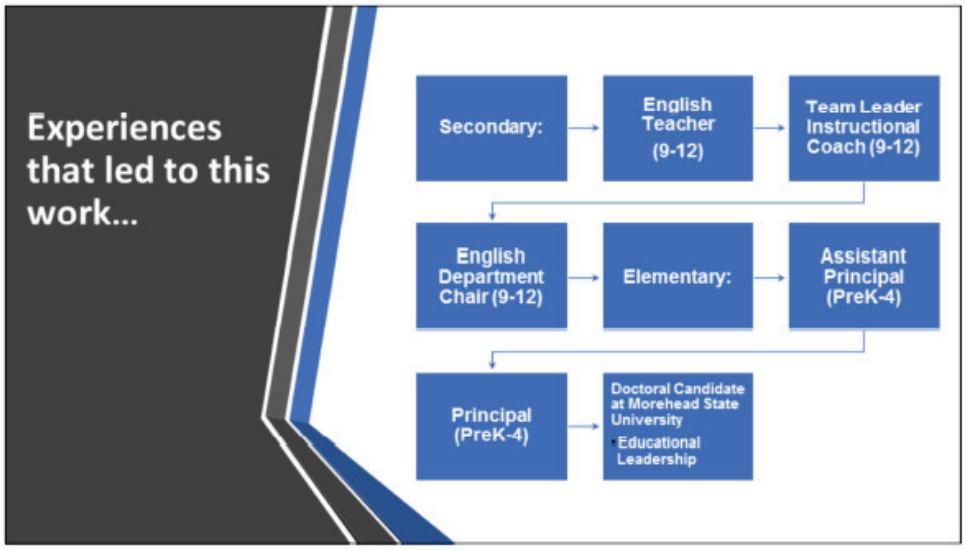
The training modules include: 1) Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Achievement, 2) Leading a Guiding Coalition through Professional Learning Communities, and 3) Effectively Implementing a Response to Intervention Framework.

The training is designed as a eight-hour professional development day.



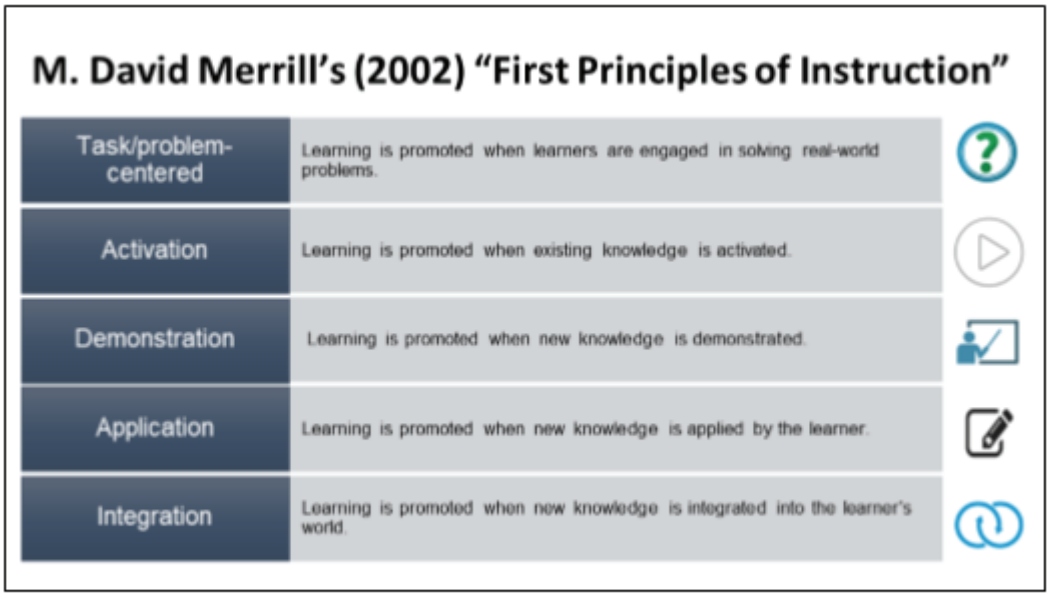
Start time of 8:00 a.m.

Welcome…. The purpose for this training is to collectively learn about the issues facing P-12 administrators in underperforming schools, and to develop an action plan for your campus that will lead to high levels of achievement for both staff and students. Today is intended to ensure that every one of you (administrators) have a clear understanding about the characteristics of underperforming schools, develop a culture of collective responsibility and high achievement, and simplify the RtI process for P-12 campuses.



Note: Trainers should edit this slide to illustrate their experiences and skills in order to establish credibility with the audience of new administrators. Emphasize your desire to relate to the characteristics of underperforming schools and how to turn them around through collaboration and support among participants in the training course.

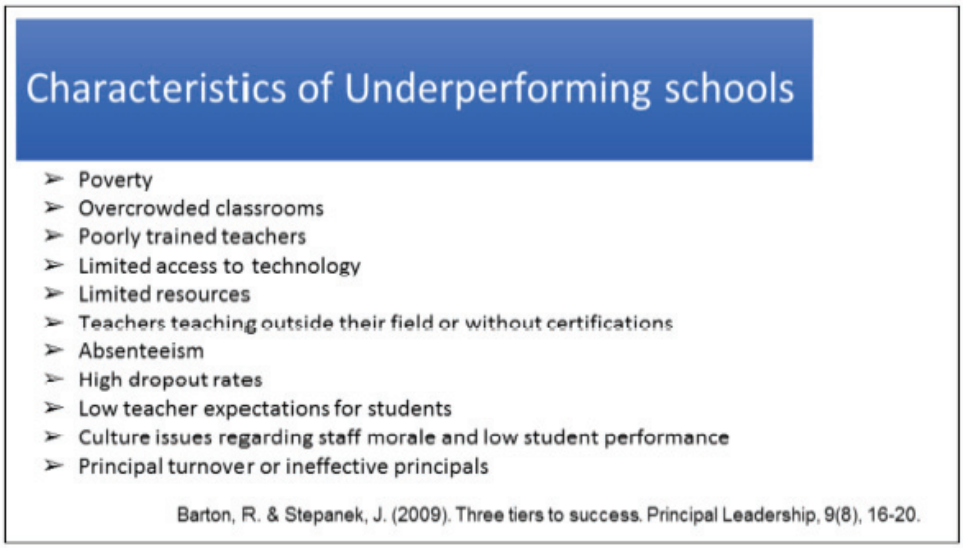
It's important to me as your trainer for you to use my experiences as an administrator to help guide you through the process to improvement. I have been where you are and had limited resources to help me direct an overhaul of school processes to avoid complete failure. I taught high school English for seven years, during which I also served as a team leader and department chair for a 6A Texas high school. I served as an assistant principal at the Elementary level for two years, which is where I spent most of my time turning around my campus. Now, I am a head principal at an elementary Title 1 campus that serves approximately 550 students and sixty staff members. Additionally, I have spent the last two and half years as a doctoral student at Morehead State University in the Department of Educational Leadership.



The instructional design for this training session is based on M. David Merrill's "First Principles of Instruction" (2002). Each training module is developed around Merrill's central principle of instruction, which is task-centered learning. Each principle will be illustrated throughout the training session with the accompanying icon.

Principle 1: Problem-centered
Principle 2: Activation
Principle 3: Demonstration
Principle 4: Application
Principle 5: Integration

In this segment of the training, we will focus on understanding the characteristics of underperforming schools.



Principals are faced with the challenge of overcoming the many characteristics of an underperforming school, most of which are out of his or her control. Barton & Stepanek (2009) describe those characteristics to include: poverty, overcrowded classrooms, poorly-trained teachers, limited access to technology, limited resources, educators teaching outside their field or without certification, absenteeism, high dropout rates, low teacher expectations for students, culture issues regarding staff morale and low student performance, and high rates of principal turnover.

"Principals play one of the biggest roles in student success because they drive so many decisions in schools and are the key to sustaining academic success" (Fullan, 2007).

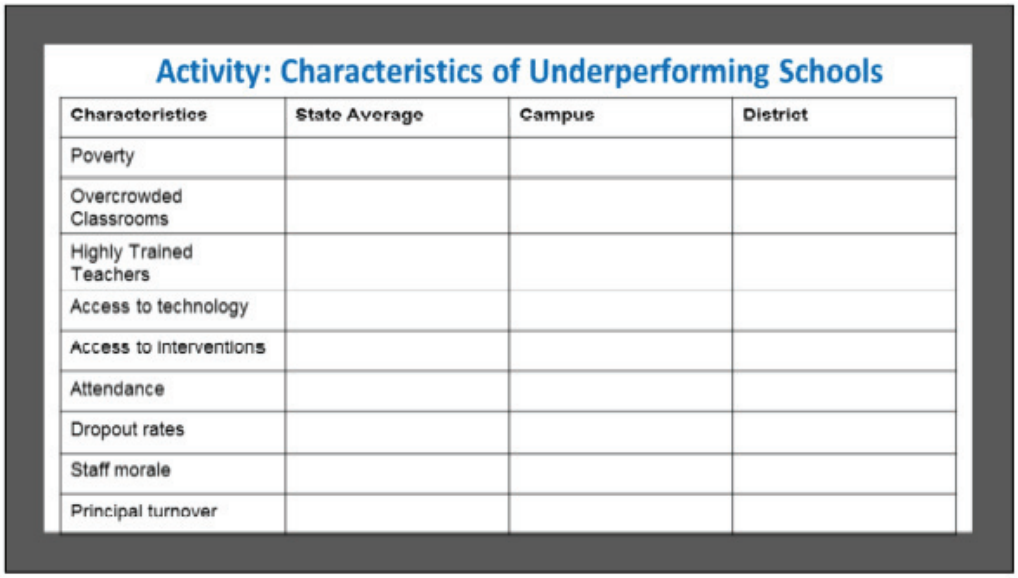
Turn to the Appendix section of your training materials and access the Characteristics of Underperforming Schools Analysis Activity (Handout #1).

We will be working together to identify characteristics of an underperforming school. I'll model the process before you complete your own analysis.

Using your own TAPR report, you will have 10 minutes to complete the activity and then we'll spend five minutes debriefing. Instructions on locating your TAPR report are illustrated on this slide.

Start time 8:15

You will have 10 minutes to complete the activity. Then we'll spend five minutes debriefing.



Activity: Characteristics of Underperforming Schools

Characteristics	State Average	Campus	District
Poverty			
Overcrowded Classrooms			
Highly Trained Teachers			
Access to technology			
Access to interventions			
Attendance			
Dropout rates			
Staff morale			
Principal turnover			

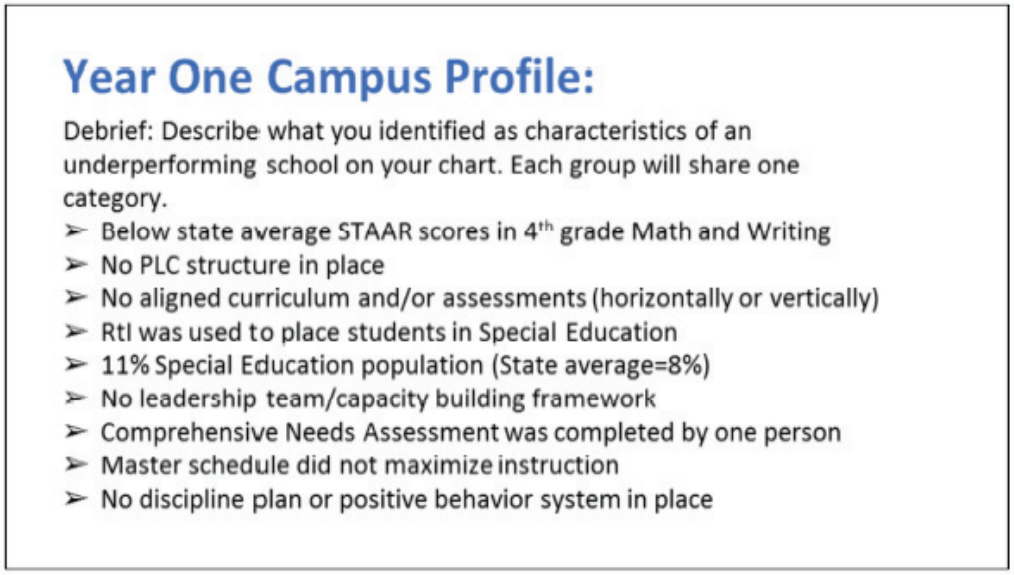
Debrief:

What do the state averages indicate as areas of underperformance across the state?

What areas did you discover that the campus is underperforming?

What areas are concerns district-wide?

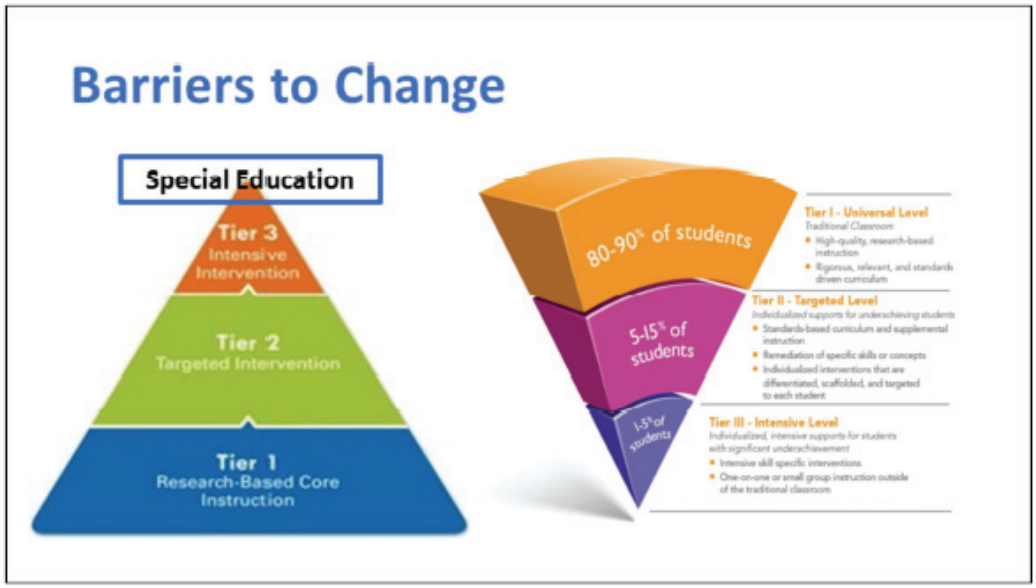
The first step in addressing underperformance is acknowledging the root causes revealed through the comprehensive needs assessment, and knowing that principals with a clear vision for improvement can make a difference.



Using data from a variety of sources, I was able to identify the needs of my campus as a first year administrator. My campus profile indicated several areas that the school was underperforming. The characteristics of my campus were:

- Below state average STAAR scores in 4th grade Math and Writing
- No PLC structure in place
- No aligned curriculum and/or assessments (horizontally or vertically)
- RtI was used to place students in Special Education
- 11% Special Education population (State average=8%)
- No leadership team/capacity building framework
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment was completed by one person
- Master schedule did not maximize instruction
- No discipline plan or positive behavior system in place"

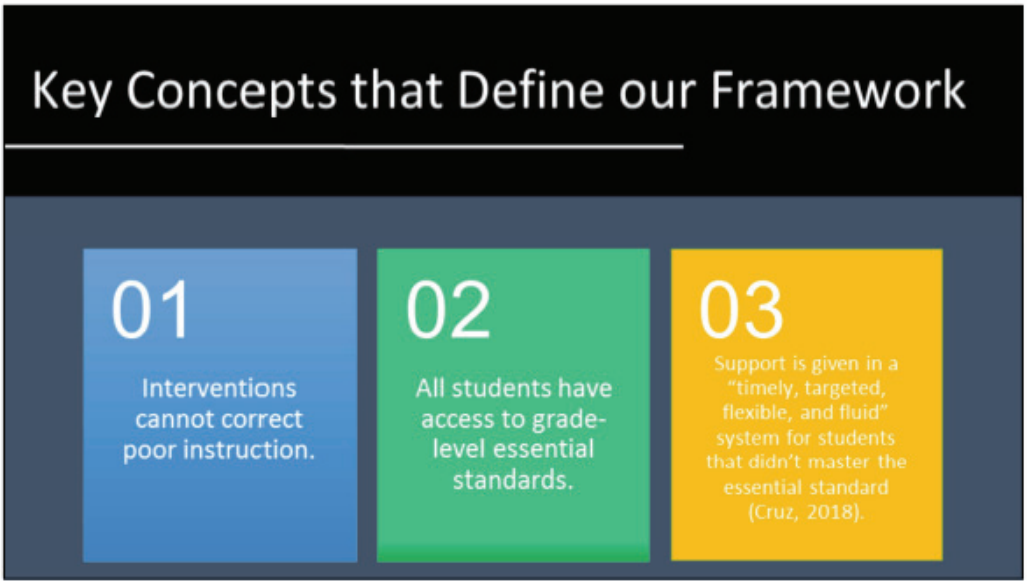
At your table, take five minutes to discuss your school's current reality.



"No change towards best practice is called malpractice" (Cruz, 2018). Administrators need to rethink the common image of the RtI pyramid to eliminate the upper tiers being disjointed from core instruction, and to further avoid tier 3 being designated for Special Education only. The inverted pyramid continually focuses on one single point, which is the individual child.

Your goal as a new administrator is to create a systematic process that ensures every child receives the additional time and support needed to learn at high levels.

How does your campus visually think about a multi-tiered system of support? Triangle on the left or triangle on the right?

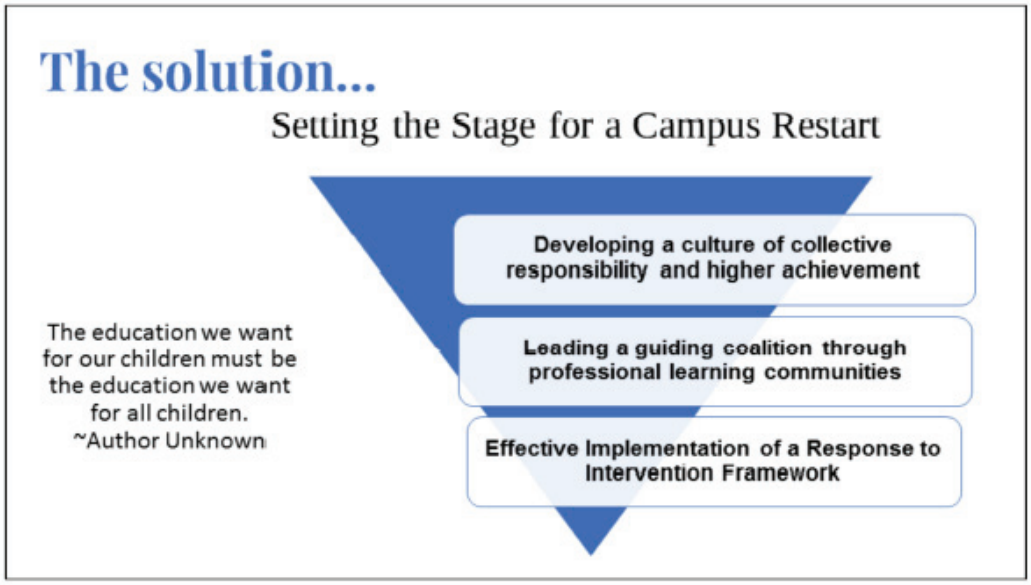


Tier 1 is a vital part of addressing low performance.

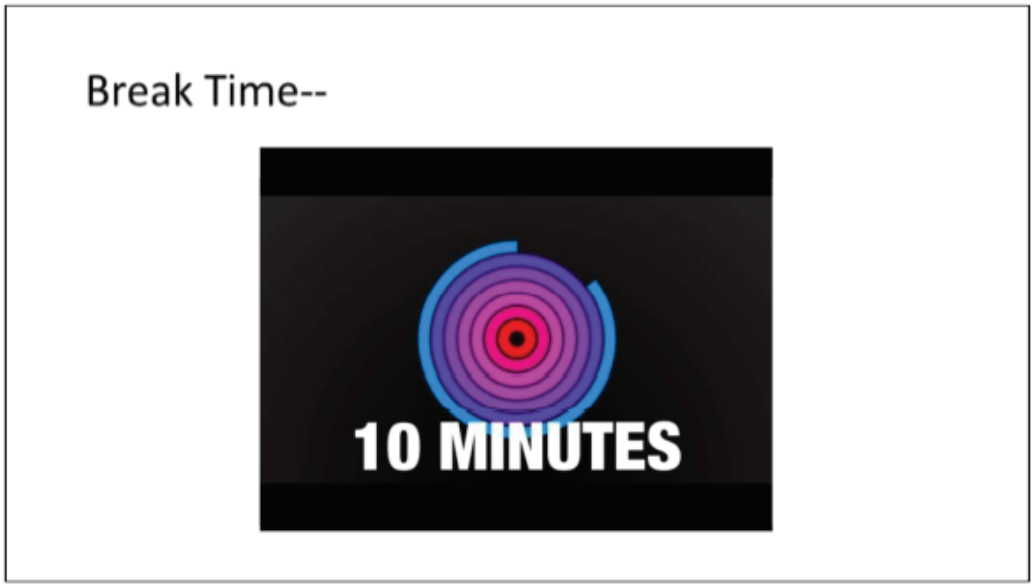
Key Concept #1: Interventions cannot correct poor instruction. Solid Tier 1 instruction is the key to a successful RtI framework.

Key Concept #2: All students have access to grade-level essential standards. Training teachers on identifying essential standards

Key Concept #3: Support is given in a "timely, targeted, flexible, and fluid" system for students that didn't master the essential standard (Cruz, 2018).

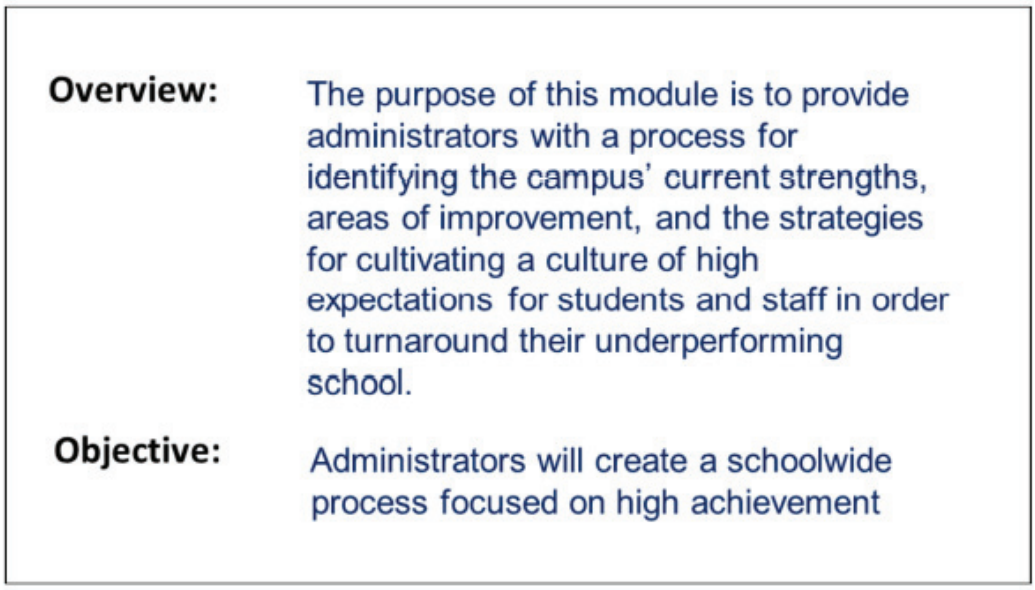


The purpose of this training is to educate administrators on solutions for addressing the characteristics of underperforming school, which includes setting the stage for a campus restart by implementing frameworks for developing a culture of collective responsibility and higher achievement, leading a guiding coalition through professional learning communities, and effectively implementing Response to Intervention.

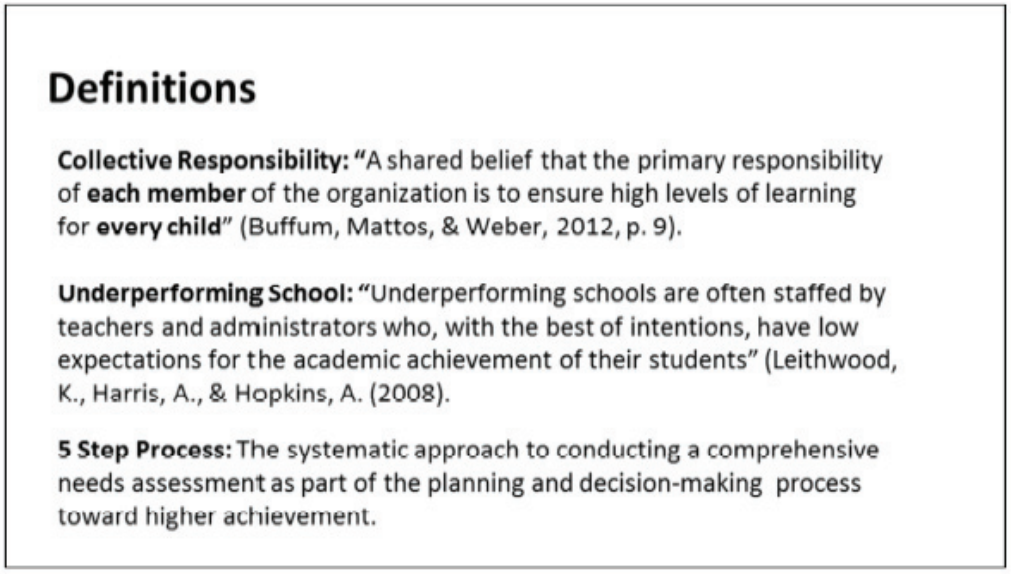

Break Time--
10 MINUTES

Start at 9:30

In this segment of the training, we will focus on developing a culture of collective responsibility and high achievement.



Developing a Culture of Collective Responsibility and High Achievement

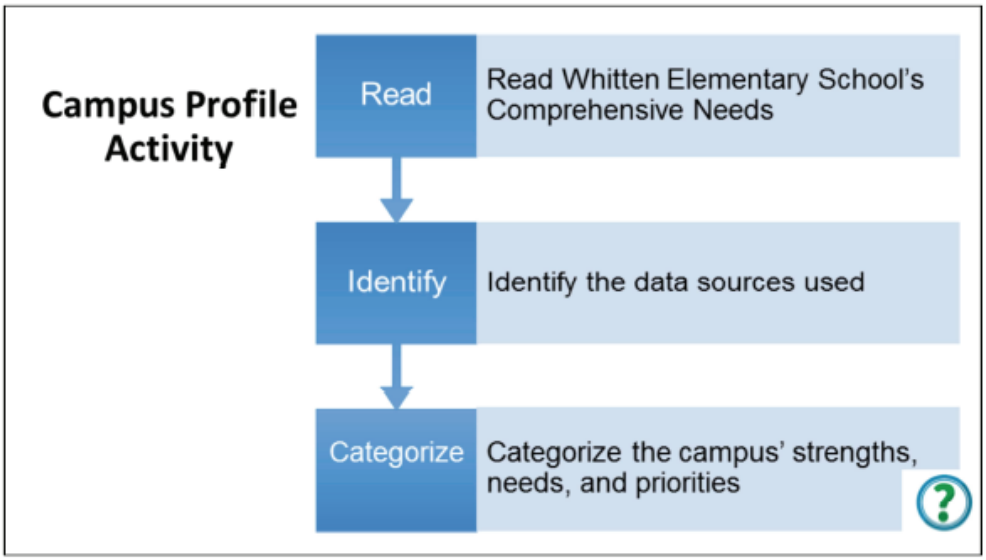


Collective Responsibility is a "shared belief that the primary responsibility of **each member** of the organization is to ensure high levels of learning for **every child**" (Buffum, Mattos, & Weber, 2012, p. 9).

"We must get the adults in our building to think differently in order for them to do differently. (Reference Beliefs Iceburg from St. Romain).

Underperforming School: "Underperforming schools are often staffed by teachers and administrators who, with the best of intentions, have low expectations for the academic achievement of their students" (Leithwood,).

5 Step Process (NCLB Comprehensive Needs Assessment, 2015): Texas Education Agency's systematic approach to conducting a comprehensive needs assessment as part of the planning and decision-making process toward higher achievement. All campuses should conduct a comprehensive needs assessment yearly to determine strengths and weaknesses of the campus.

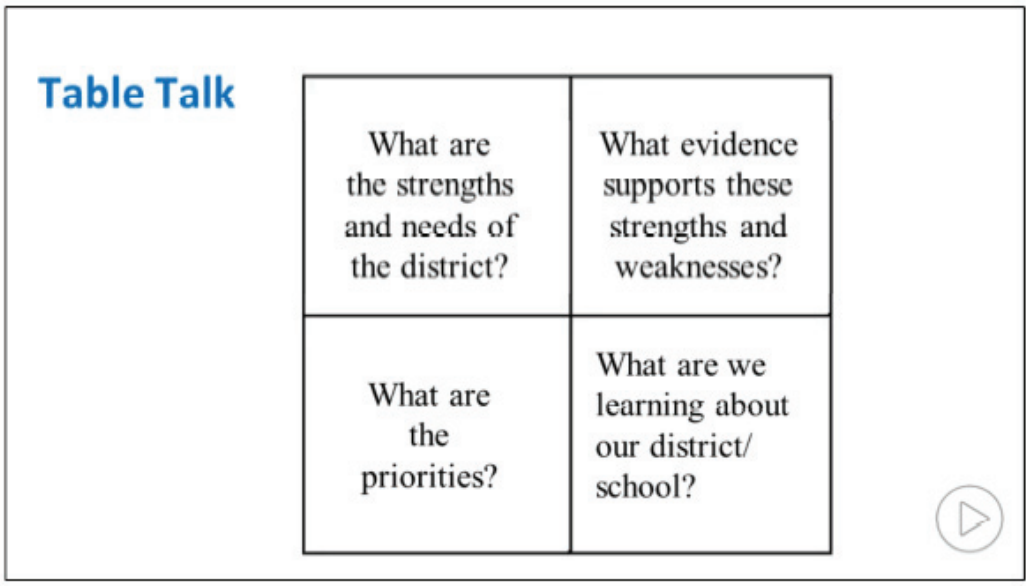


Identifying the problem

Read Whitten's Elementary Schools comprehensive needs assessment.

Identify the data sources used in the needs assessment.

Using the Summary Chart Handout, categorize the campus' strengths, needs, and priorities.



Start at 10:00
At your table, discuss each question considering evidence from the campus profile activity. We will review your findings as a whole-group in ten minutes.
What are the strengths and needs of the district?

_____
_____

What evidence supports these strengths and weaknesses?

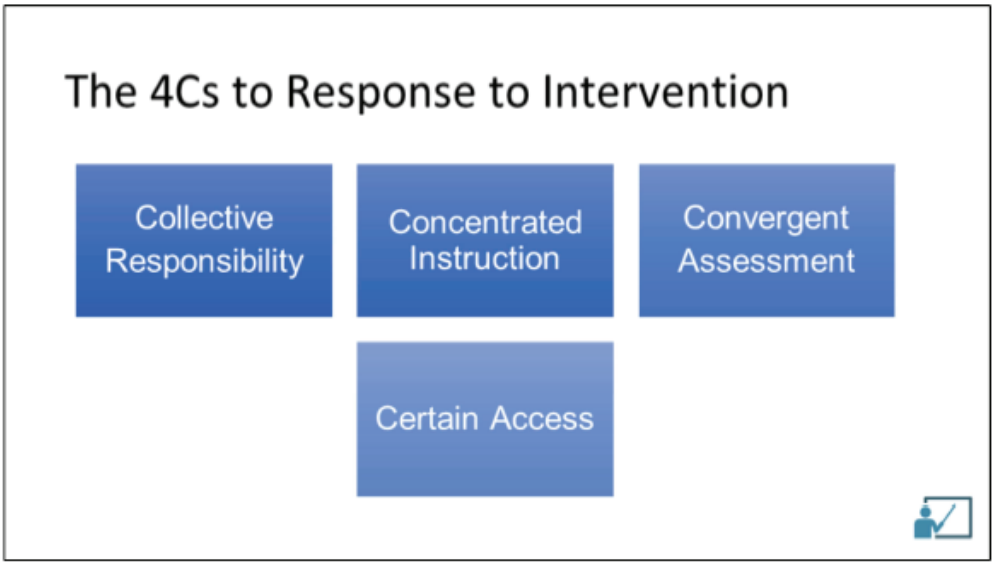
_____
_____

What are the priorities?

_____
_____

What are we learning about our district/school?

_____
_____



Start time 10:15
Once you have identified your campus' areas of strengths and weaknesses, it's critical to develop a clear vision toward improvement. Keep in mind that "great organizations "maintain unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties, and at the same time, have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts about your current reality, whatever they may be" (Collins, 2005, p. 13).

Buffum, Mattos, and Weber (2012) developed the essential principles for change, which includes collective responsibility, concentrated instruction, convergent assessment, and certain access (Four Cs). These guiding principles and practices are "simple, practical, and doable" and will guide administrators' actions in providing a higher performing campus that allows all students to succeed.

Handout #3: The Four Cs of RTI: Using Whitten Elementary as an example

Go over the definitions and model the first question in each of the four categories. Allow participants five minutes to complete as many questions as they can. The goal is just to expose them to this document to use on their campus at a later time with their leadership teams.

Collective Responsibility: A shared belief that the primary responsibility of each member is to ensure high levels of learning for every child.

Concentrated Instruction: A systematic process of identifying essential knowledge and skills that all students must master to learn at high levels.

Convergent Assessment: An ongoing process of collectively analyzing targeted evidence to determine the specific learning needs of each child and the effectiveness of the instruction the child receives in meeting these needs.

Certain Access: A systematic process that guarantees every student will receive the time and support needed to learn at high levels.

What systems do you currently have in place that set high expectations for students and staff? How do you hold each other accountable?

Research suggests that principals "must be 'tight' about what schools must do to help all students learn and 'loose' on how they carry out these concepts and practices" (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006).

According to my year one profile, it was evident that the only way I could ensure we were all moving in the right direction would be to have an on-going review system that included quarterly reviews from stakeholders, a curriculum overhaul that was monitored through daily lesson plans and six-week syllabi, data meetings with the leadership teams and within PLCs, leadership team meetings and feedback, and on-going professional development and coaching using the Texas Teachers Evaluation and Support System.

Does this require a lot of time from administrators? Of course. Does it create more paperwork for teachers that are already overworked? Unfortunately, yes--at the beginning. However, frontloading the work made everyone's job much easier down the road and was vital to our turn-around success.

The following slides demonstrate *how* to create a tight guideline of non-negotiables to help all students learn at high levels.

Site-based Decision Making Team

Goal 1: Pottsboro Elementary will continue to strive toward excellence by increasing achievement of all students at all grade levels.

Performance Objective 1: 4th grade students will improve STAAR scores from 73% to 80% in Math, 81% to 88% in Reading, and 69% to 78% in Writing by 2020.

Summative Evaluation 1:

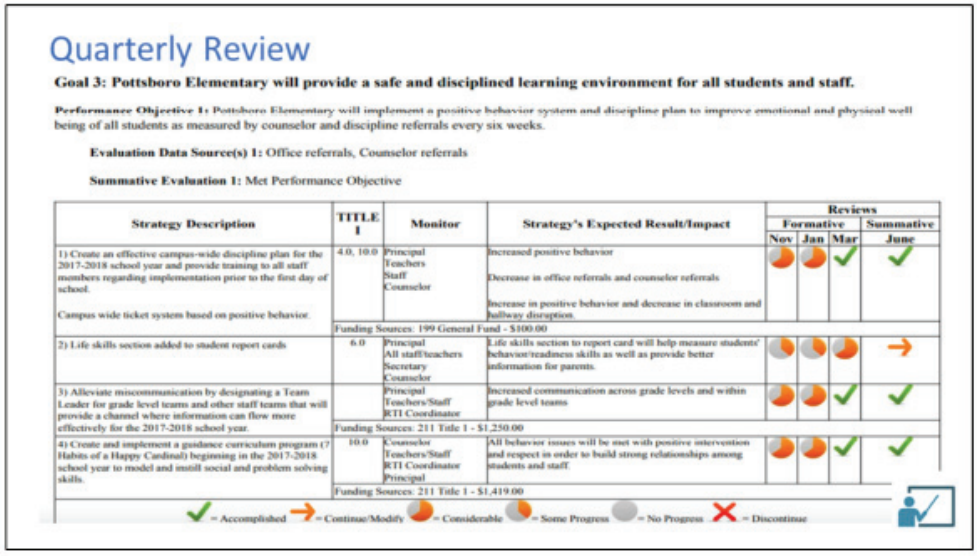
Strategy Description	Monitor	Strategy's Expected Result/Impact	Reviews			
			Formative			Summative
			Nov	Jan	Mar	June
1) Each grade level PLC will use data to evaluate student performances and will adjust/reteach/enrich instruction based on learning outcomes.	Administrators, RtI Coordinator, Grade Level Teachers	Improved STAAR scores in math and reading with an increase in commended ratings				
2) Ongoing assessments and documentation through Istation and Star Renaissance Reading and Math.	Grade Level Teachers, Computer Aide, RtI Coordinator	Analysis of student performance to monitor progress toward STAAR achievement				
3) 40 minutes a day of Response to Intervention intensive tutoring groups.	RTI Coordinator, Faculty/Title 1 Staff, Administrators	Closing achievement gaps, intensive remediation, progress monitoring				

100% = Accomplished → = Continue/Modify 0% = No Progress ✗ = Discontinue

Collective Responsibility

As a new principal, I needed to hear from all stakeholders on their perception of the needs of the campus. I established a campus site-based committee and we all went to work. We conducted a comprehensive needs assessment that gathered both quantitative and qualitative data. We used that data to identify root causes, problem statements and then SMART goals that would realistically address the key issues we were facing on campus.

The SBDM team meets monthly to discuss progress and quarterly to complete formative reviews of the progress or lack of progress toward each goal.



Quarterly Review

Goal 3: Pottsboro Elementary will provide a safe and disciplined learning environment for all students and staff.

Performance Objective 1: Pottsboro Elementary will implement a positive behavior system and discipline plan to improve emotional and physical well being of all students as measured by counselor and discipline referrals every six weeks.

Evaluation Data Source(s) 1: Office referrals, Counselor referrals

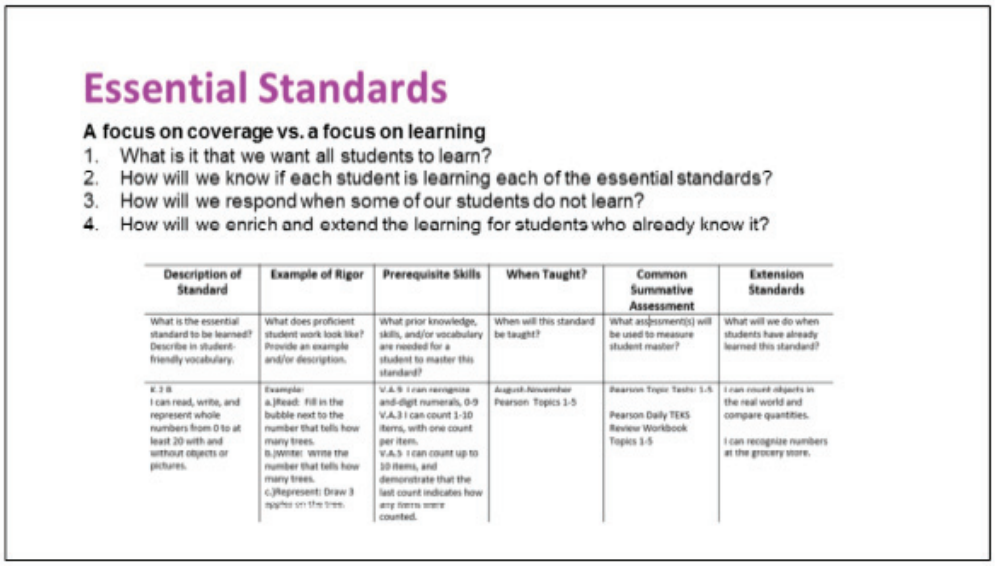
Summative Evaluation 1: Met Performance Objective

Strategy Description	TITLE I	Monitor	Strategy's Expected Result/Impact	Reviews			
				Formative			Summative
				Nov	Jan	Mar	June
1) Create an effective campus-wide discipline plan for the 2017-2018 school year and provide training to all staff members regarding implementation prior to the first day of school. Campus wide ticket system based on positive behavior.	4.0, 10.0	Principal Teachers Staff Counselor	Increased positive behavior Decrease in office referrals and counselor referrals Increase in positive behavior and decrease in classroom and hallway disruption.			✓	✓
Funding Sources: 199 General Fund - $100.00							
2) Life skills section added to student report cards	6.0	Principal All staff/teachers Secretary Counselor	Life skills section to report card will help measure students' behavior/readiness skills as well as provide better information for parents.				→
3) Alleviate miscommunication by designating a Team Leader for grade level teams and other staff teams that will provide a channel where information can flow more effectively for the 2017-2018 school year.		Principal Teachers/Staff RTI Coordinator	Increased communication across grade levels and within grade level teams			✓	✓
Funding Sources: 211 Title 1 - $1,250.00							
4) Create and implement a guidance curriculum program (7 Habits of a Happy Cardinal) beginning in the 2017-2018 school year to model and instill social and problem solving skills.	10.0	Counselor Teachers/Staff RTI Coordinator Principal	All behavior issues will be met with positive intervention and respect in order to build strong relationships among students and staff.			✓	✓
Funding Sources: 211 Title 1 - $1,419.00							

✓ = Accomplished → = Continue/Modify = Considerable = Some Progress = No Progress ✗ = Discontinue

Collective Responsibility

The quarterly review is vital for ongoing support from all stakeholders. A summative review is conducted in the summer to determine both the current needs as well as the future needs of the campus. Leading up to the next school year, your SBDM team should have a clear vision for improvement and the strategies and resources required to successfully prepare for the upcoming year.



Essential Standards

A focus on coverage vs. a focus on learning

1. What is it that we want all students to learn?
2. How will we know if each student is learning each of the essential standards?
3. How will we respond when some of our students do not learn?
4. How will we enrich and extend the learning for students who already know it?

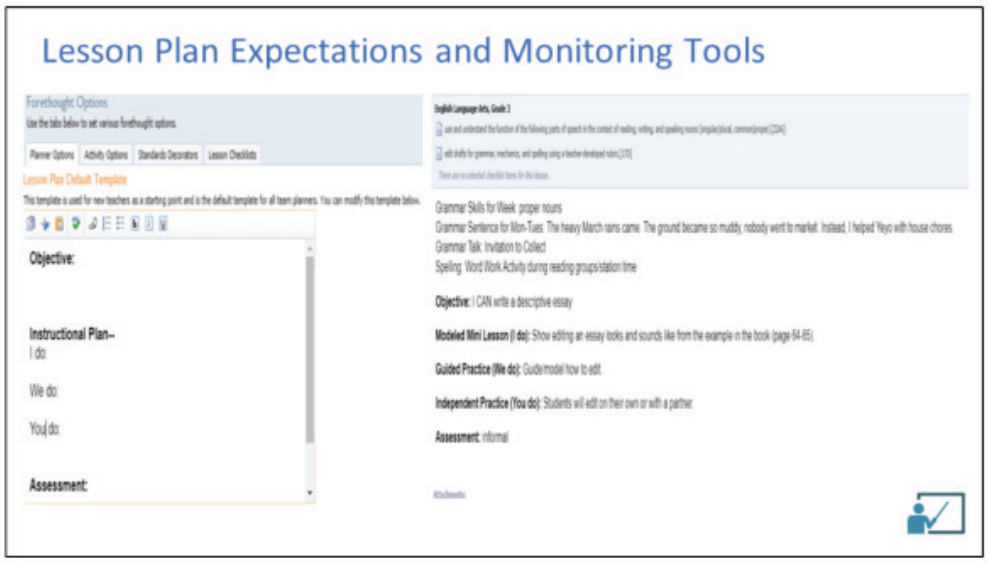
Description of Standard	Example of Rigor	Prerequisite Skills	When Taught?	Common Summative Assessment	Extension Standards
What is the essential standard to be learned? Describe in student-friendly vocabulary.	What does proficient student work look like? Provide an example and/or description.	What prior knowledge, skills, and/or vocabulary are needed for a student to master this standard?	When will this standard be taught?	What assessment(s) will be used to measure student master?	What will we do when students have already learned this standard?
K.3 B I can read, write, and represent whole numbers from 0 to at least 20 with and without objects or pictures.	Example: a.)Read: Fill in the bubble next to the number that tells how many trees. b.)Write: Write the number that tells how many trees. c.)Represent: Draw 3 apples on the tree.	V.A.9 I can recognize and-digit numerals, 0-9 V.A.3 I can count 1-10 items, with one count per item. V.A.5 I can count up to 10 items, and demonstrate that the last count indicates how any items were counted.	August-November Pearson Topics 1-5	Pearson Topic Tests: 1-5 Pearson Daily TEKS Review Workbook Topics 1-5	I can count objects in the real world and compare quantities. I can recognize numbers at the grocery store.

Concentrated Instruction

Essential standards force us to focus on learning instead of on covering TEKS. Teachers need additional training on how to respond to the following questions:

1. What is it that we want all students to learn?
2. How will we know if each student is learning each of the essential standards?
3. How will we respond when some of our students do not learn?
4. How will we enrich and extend the learning for students who already know it?

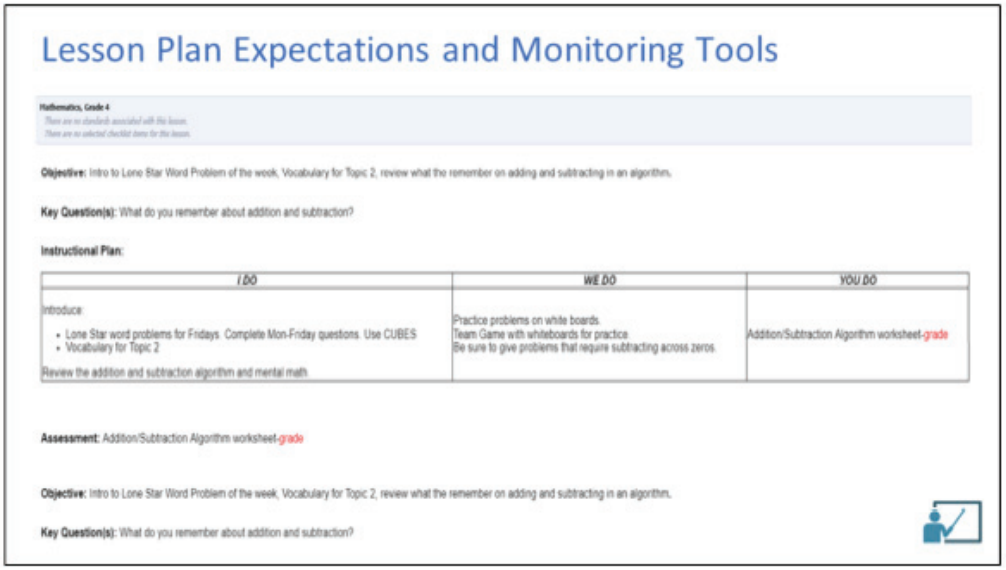
In your appendix, please reference the Essential Standards Chart for a resource for identifying essential standards.



Concentrated Instruction

Yes, every teacher's worst nightmare. I require them to submit lesson plans. As a new administrator, I often noticed during walkthroughs major instructional gaps on grade-level teams. I'm all about creating formative assessments and differentiated activities that meet the diverse needs of your students. However, there was no alignment of objectives, standards, or schedules; therefore, no way for me to help monitor curriculum implementation and alignment. This was also very evident in the data. Scores would range from 60% passing to 95% passing. This indicated a major gap in rigor, instructional design and convergent assessments, which are all vital to our RTI process and our ability to truly see what each student needed to be successful.

I gave direct expectations for lesson plans and schedules and I monitored them consistently. Every Thursday morning at 7:30 plans are due. I conduct reviews, do walkthroughs, and monitor student data.



Lesson Plan Expectations and Monitoring Tools

Mathematics, Grade 4

There are no standards associated with this lesson.
There are no selected checklist items for this lesson.

Objective: Intro to Lone Star Word Problem of the week, Vocabulary for Topic 2, review what the remember on adding and subtracting in an algorithm.

Key Question(s): What do you remember about addition and subtraction?

Instructional Plan:

I DO	WE DO	YOU DO
Introduce • Lone Star word problems for Fridays. Complete Mon-Friday questions. Use CUBES • Vocabulary for Topic 2 Review the addition and subtraction algorithm and mental math.	Practice problems on white boards. Team Game with whiteboards for practice. Be sure to give problems that require subtracting across zeros.	Addition/Subtraction Algorithm worksheet-grade

Assessment: Addition/Subtraction Algorithm worksheet-grade

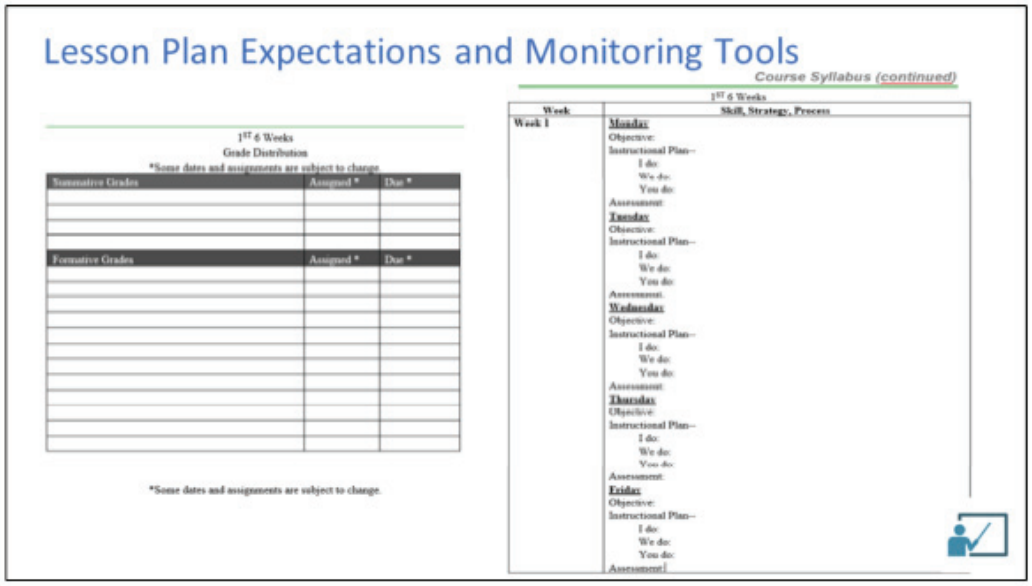
Objective: Intro to Lone Star Word Problem of the week, Vocabulary for Topic 2, review what the remember on adding and subtracting in an algorithm.

Key Question(s): What do you remember about addition and subtraction?

Concentrated Instruction

This lesson plan model includes TEKS monitoring tool.

Teachers, on their own, have started adding in additional information because over time they've started to love having this planned out and easily accessed by their teams or even substitutes.



Concentrated Instruction

2nd year as an administrator, our 4th grade team was departmentalized. Our math teacher passed away from a heart attack, unexpectedly in February. This year, our 1st grade Science and Social Studies planner fell in her classroom and broke two ribs and is likely to be out for two weeks.

This is why we have a six-week syllabus. There is no gap in planning or instruction. All team members have a clear scope of instruction. Is it set in stone, of course not, but it keeps us all rowing in the same direction.

Teachers that buy into collective responsibility and the vision for improving the underperforming campus will have no issues with these requirements. You'll quickly see who is in for the long-haul and who would be a better fit somewhere else.

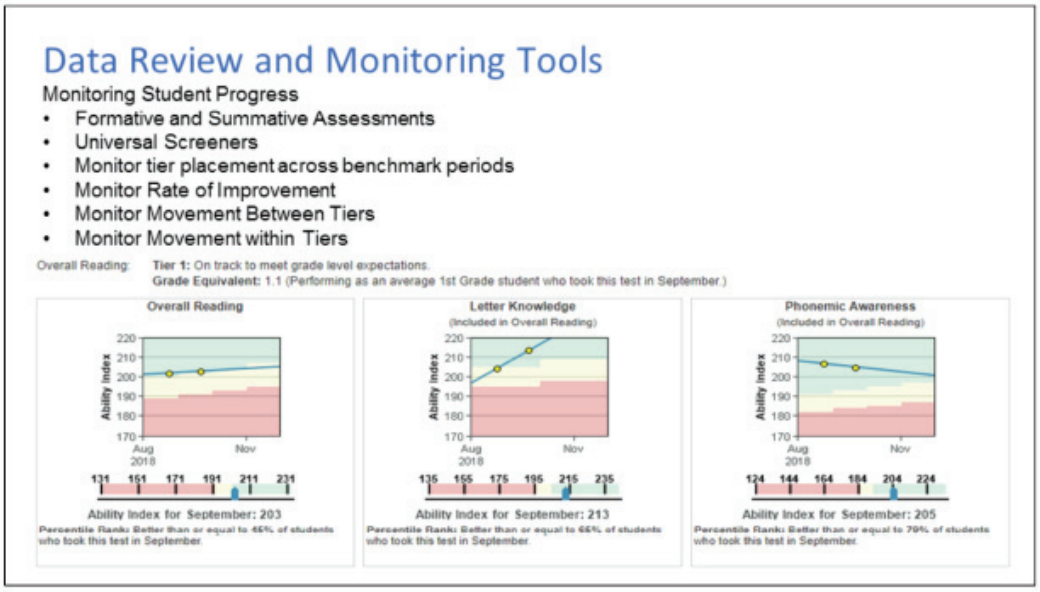
Discuss: Learning formula

Data Review and Monitoring Tools

Student	May '17	Sept. '17	Oct. '17	Nov. '17	Dec. '17	Jan. '18	Feb. '18	Mar. '18	Apr. '18	May '18
John	2.5	3.2	2.4	3.11	3.7	3.11	3.8	3.11	3.11	
	M3	M1	M2	M3*	M3*	M3	M2	M3*	M3*	
Suzy	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	
	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	
Ben	3.11	3.3	3.7	3.11	3.4	3.5	3.11	3.11	3.11	
	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	
Lexi	3.8	2.5	2.11	3.6	3.5	3.0	2.5	3.11	3.11	
	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	
Elizabeth	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	3.11	
	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	M1	
SPED	Reading = Grade Equivalent									
Tier 2	Math = Tier Level									
Tier 3										
* Critical										
RtI Process Started										

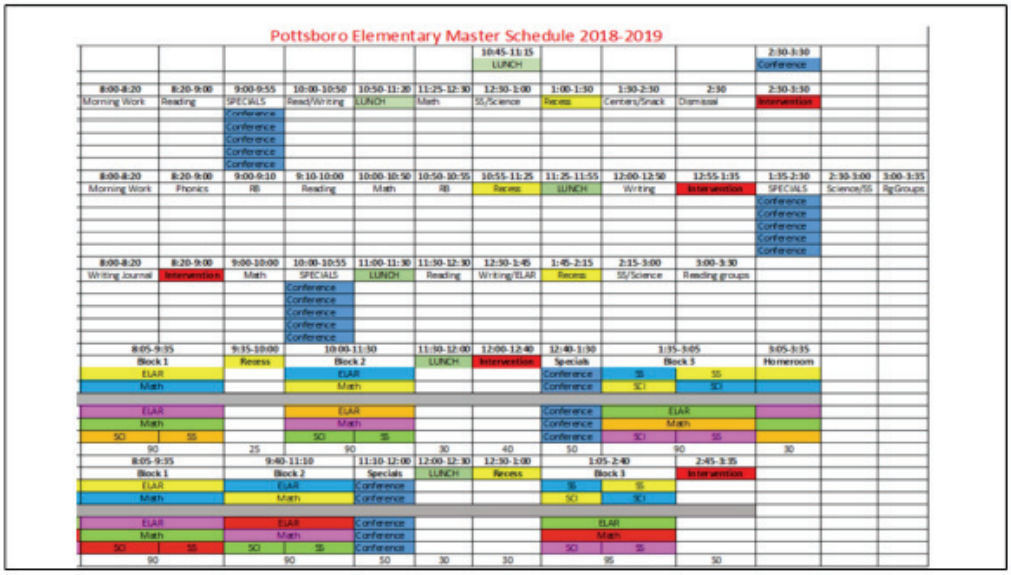
Convergent Assessment

TTESS requires student progress monitoring. Universal screeners embedded in your RtI framework are a great tool to use for this state requirement.



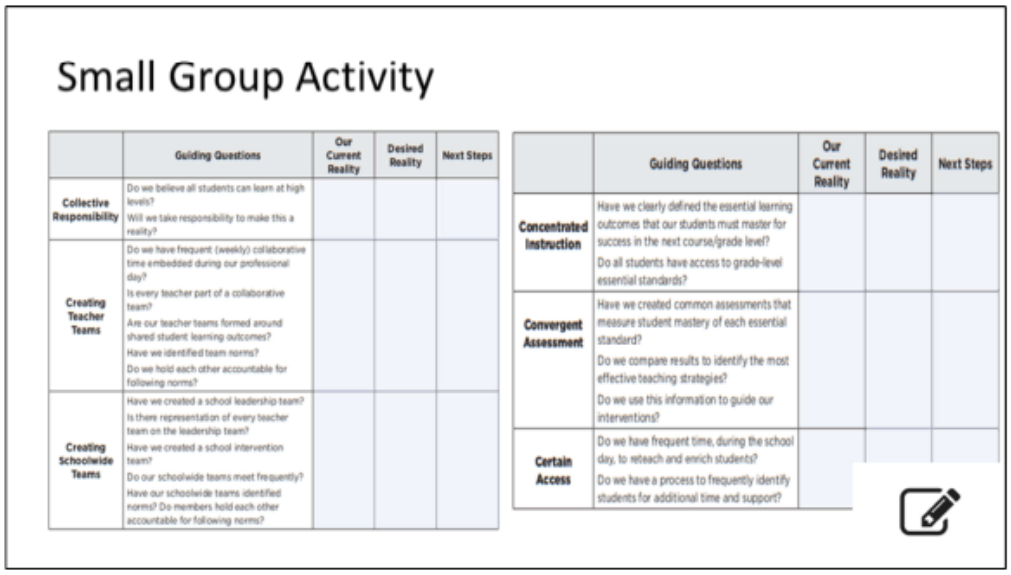
Convergent Assessment

TTESS Student Progress Monitoring Tool



Certain Access

Without a set intervention time embedded in the school day, we had students missing core instruction for speech therapy, dyslexia, resource, GT, etc. It's vital that all students get access to grade-level instruction because if we teach students that are below grade level below grade-level all year—where will they end up?

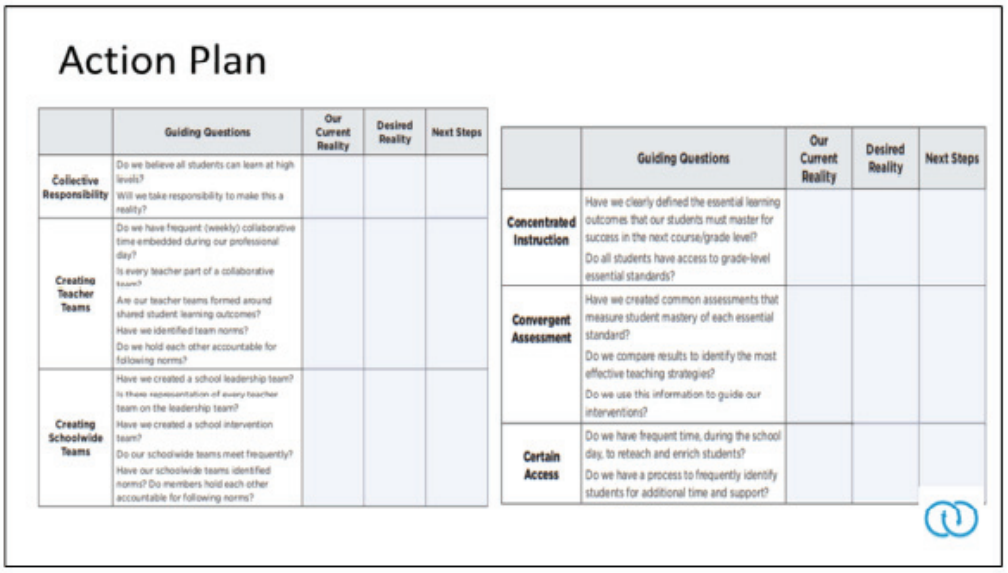


Start time 10:30

Using the information provided about Whitten Elementary school, work with your table to complete the 4Cs activity to determine the current reality of the school's performance regarding collective responsibility, concentrated instruction, convergent assessment, and certain access.

In the appendix section, please access the 4Cs handout.

You will have 10 minutes to complete the activity. Then we'll spend five minutes debriefing.



Action Plan

	Guiding Questions	Our Current Reality	Desired Reality	Next Steps
Collective Responsibility	Do we believe all students can learn at high levels? Will we take responsibility to make this a reality?			
Creating Teacher Teams	Do we have frequent (weekly) collaborative time embedded during our professional day? Is every teacher part of a collaborative team? Are our teacher teams formed around shared student learning outcomes? Have we identified team norms? Do we hold each other accountable for following norms?			
Creating Schoolwide Teams	Have we created a school leadership team? Is there representation of every teacher team on the leadership team? Have we created a school intervention team? Do our schoolwide teams meet frequently? Have our schoolwide teams identified norms? Do members hold each other accountable for following norms?			

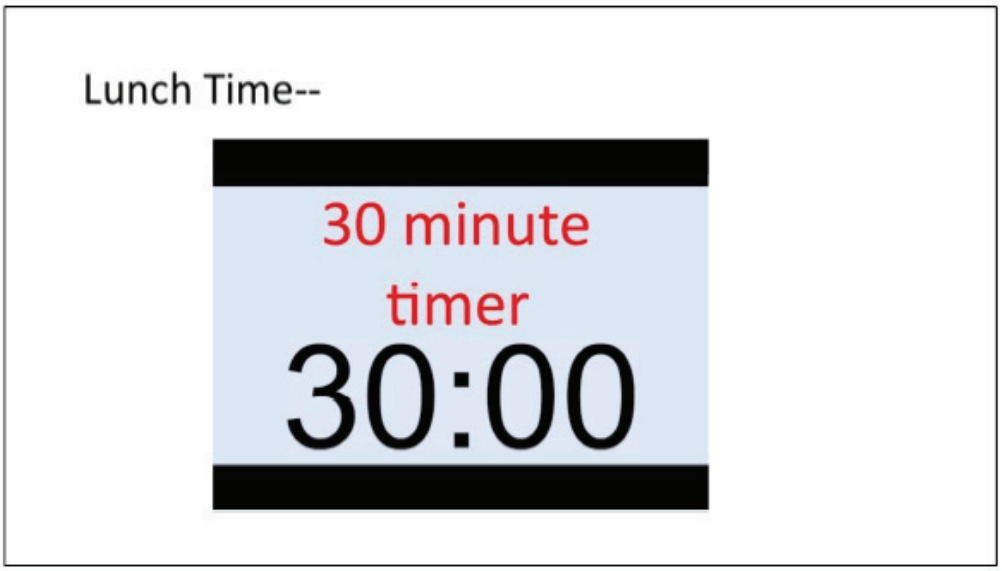
	Guiding Questions	Our Current Reality	Desired Reality	Next Steps
Concentrated Instruction	Have we clearly defined the essential learning outcomes that our students must master for success in the next course/grade level? Do all students have access to grade-level essential standards?			
Convergent Assessment	Have we created common assessments that measure student mastery of each essential standard? Do we compare results to identify the most effective teaching strategies? Do we use this information to guide our interventions?			
Certain Access	Do we have frequent time, during the school day, to reteach and enrich students? Do we have a process to frequently identify students for additional time and support?			

Start time 11:00

To integrate the skills learned about creating a culture of collective responsibility, you will now create your own action plan for improvement by completing the 4Cs analysis on your own campus. Please take ten minutes to determine your current reality versus the desired reality of your current campus.

The **Next Steps** column will include the strategies discussed in slides 20-30.

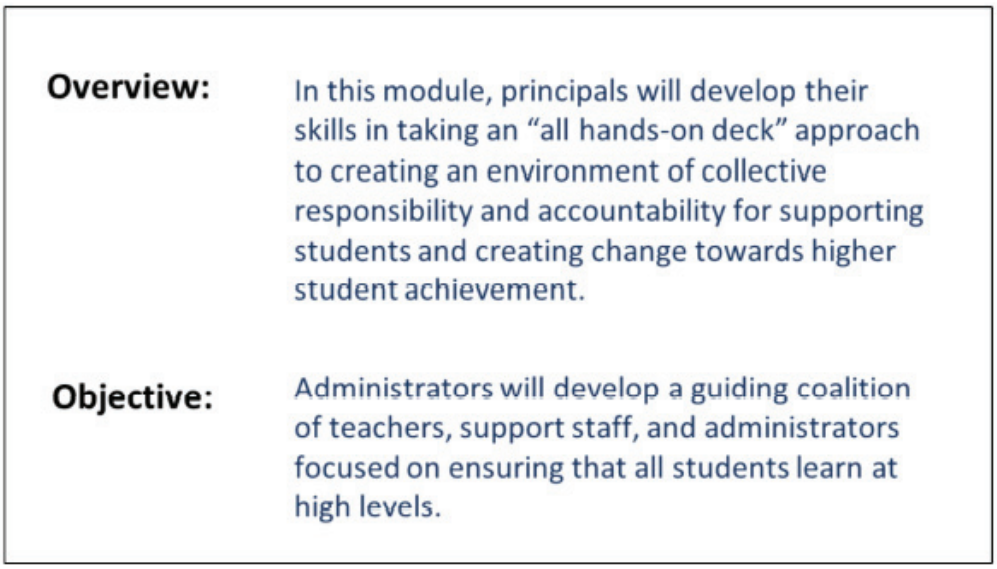
In the appendix section, please access the 4Cs handout.



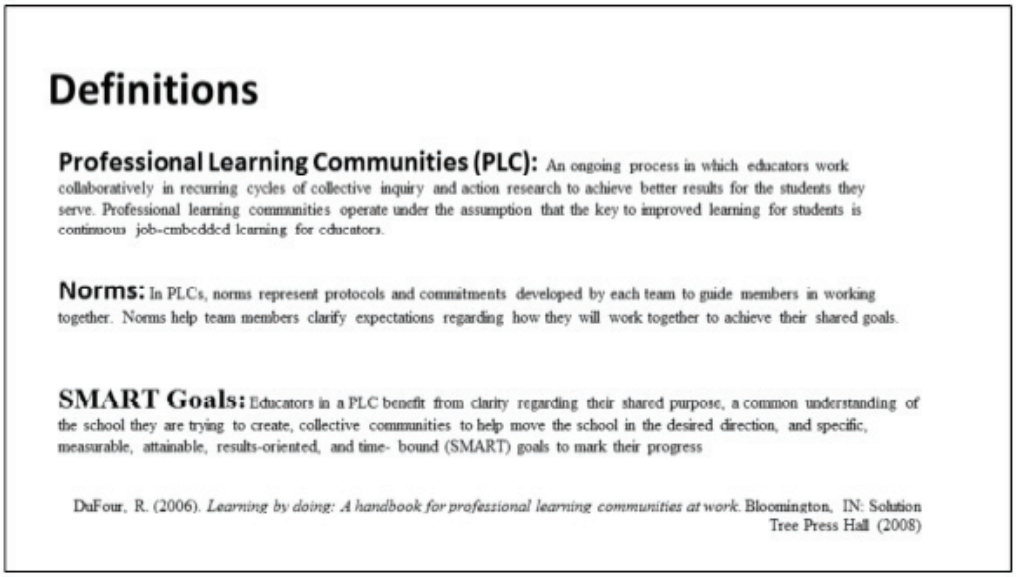
At this time, we will break for lunch from 11:30-12:00.

Start at 12:00

In this segment of the training, we will focus on leading a guiding coalition through PLCs.



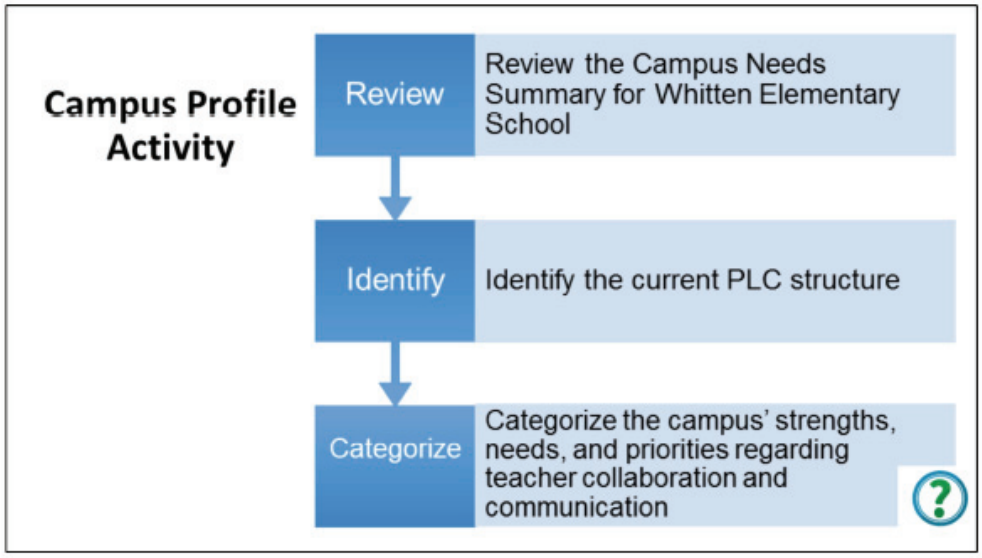
Leading a Guiding Coalition Through Professional Learning Communities



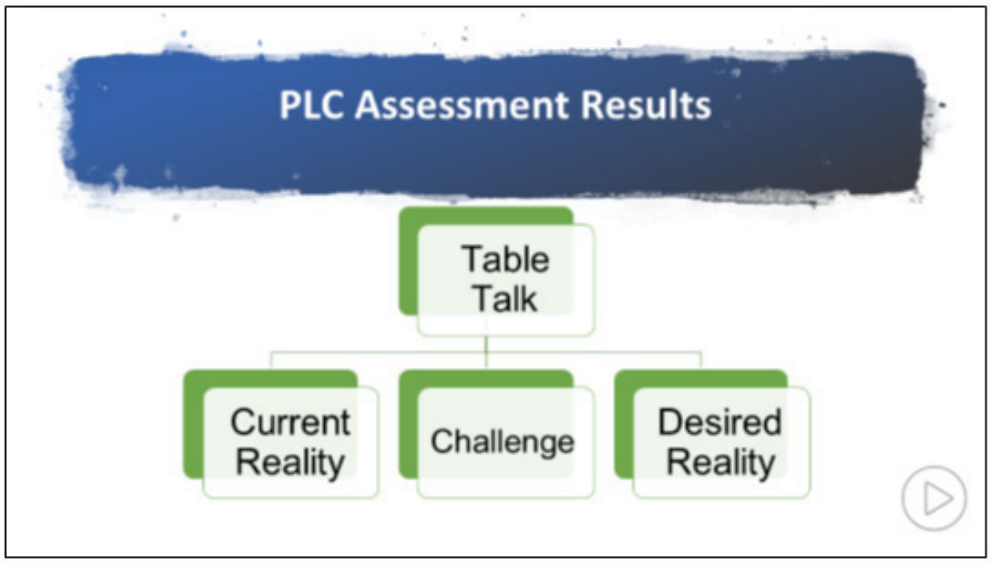
Professional Learning Communities (PLC): An ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.

Norms: In PLCs, norms represent protocols and commitments developed by each team to guide members in working together. Norms help team members clarify expectations regarding how they will work together to achieve their shared goals.

SMART Goals: Educators in a PLC benefit from clarity regarding their shared purpose, a common understanding of the school they are trying to create, collective communities to help move the school in the desired direction, and specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time- bound (SMART) goals to mark their progress.



Start time 12:10
Identifying the problem



Start at 12:30

At your table, discuss each question considering evidence from the campus profile activity.

What are the strengths and needs of the district regarding PLCs?

_____

_____

What evidence supports these strengths and weaknesses?

_____

_____

What are the priorities in improving PLC systems on campus?

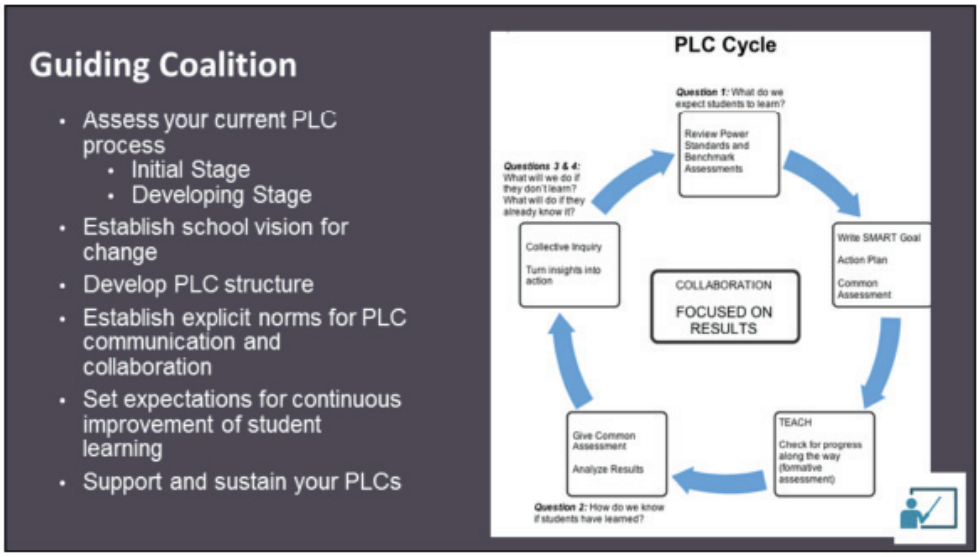
_____

_____

What are you learning about our own district/school?

_____

_____

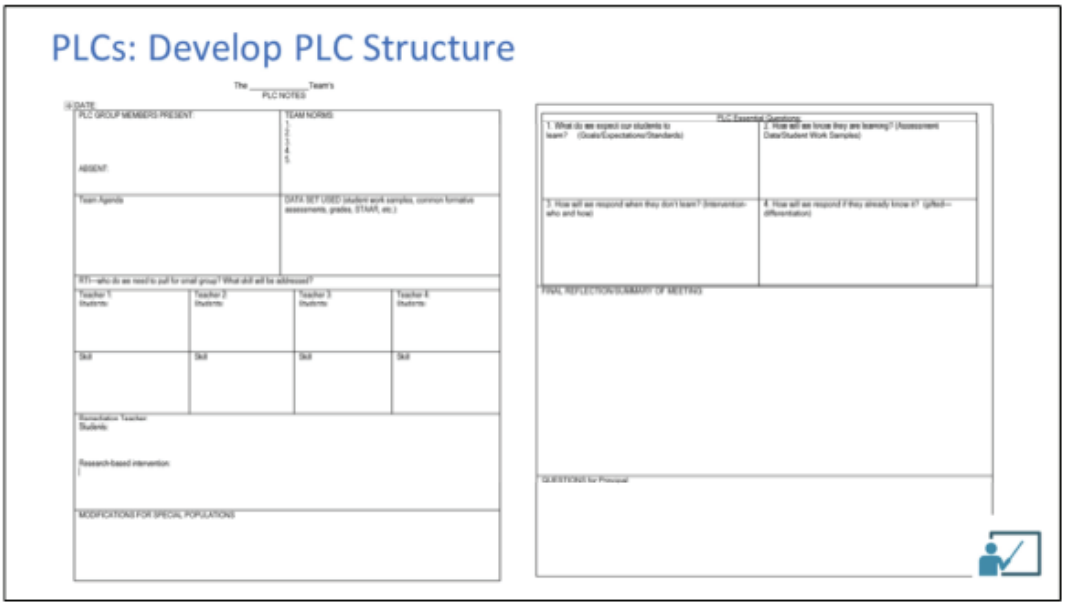


To create a guiding coalition, the following steps are key to your success as an administrator in supporting and sustaining professional learning communities.

- Assess your current PLC process
  - Initial Stage
  - Developing Stage
- Establish school vision for change
- Develop PLC structure
- Establish explicit norms for PLC communication and collaboration
- Set expectations for continuous improvement of student learning
- Support and sustain your PLCs

Please locate your Learning by Doing Handout in your Appendix section of your training materials. We will complete the PLC assessment together.

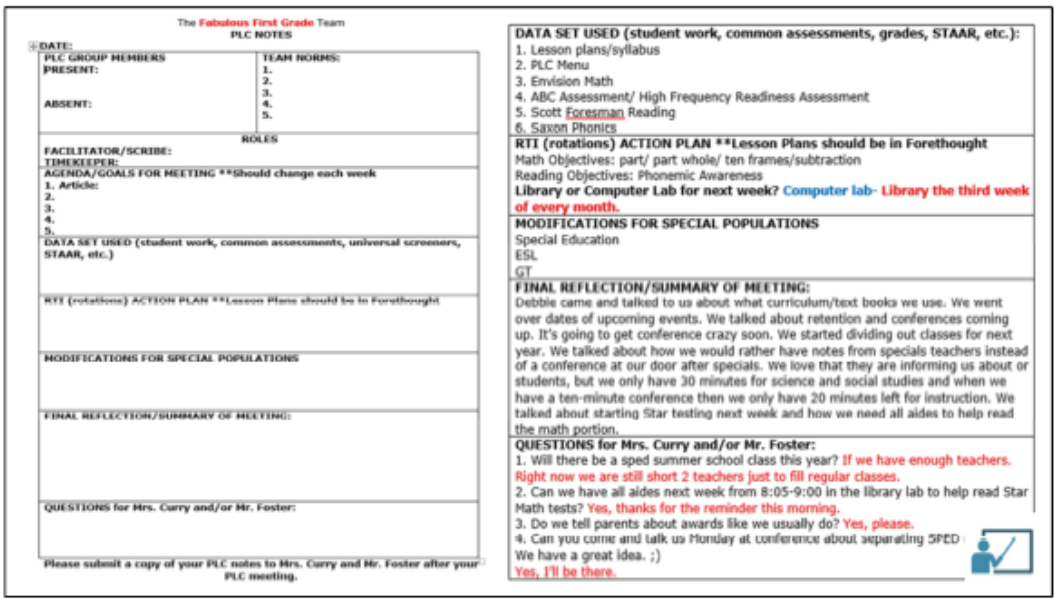
Complete the PLC assessment: *Learning by Doing* Handout



PLC structures allow you as the administrator to ensure sustainability.

Set clear expectations on:

1. When teachers will be required to meet and how often.
2. How you will assess the productivity of the meeting. A PLC template shown above is a great assessment tool. Teachers are required to complete this template at each meeting and submit to administrators by the end of the day.
3. Norms keep the team focused and should be chosen by the team, approved by the administrator, and reviewed before each meeting. We will have an opportunity to create sample norms in a few minutes.
4. PLC essential questions keep the meeting focused on learning and should be the required outline for the meeting.



The Fabulous First Grade Team
PLC NOTES

DATE:

PLC GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT: ABSENT:	TEAM NORMS: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

ROLES
FACILITATOR/SCRIBE:
TIMEKEEPER:

AGENDA/GOALS FOR MEETING **Should change each week
1. Article:
2.
3.
4.
5.

DATA SET USED (student work, common assessments, universal screeners, STAAR, etc.)

RTI (rotations) ACTION PLAN **Lesson Plans should be in Forethought

MODIFICATIONS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

FINAL REFLECTION/SUMMARY OF MEETING:

QUESTIONS for Mrs. Curry and/or Mr. Foster:

Please submit a copy of your PLC notes to Mrs. Curry and Mr. Foster after your PLC meeting.

DATA SET USED (student work, common assessments, grades, STAAR, etc.):
1. Lesson plans/syllabus
2. PLC Menu
3. Envision Math
4. ABC Assessment/ High Frequency Readiness Assessment
5. Scott Foresman Reading
6. Saxon Phonics

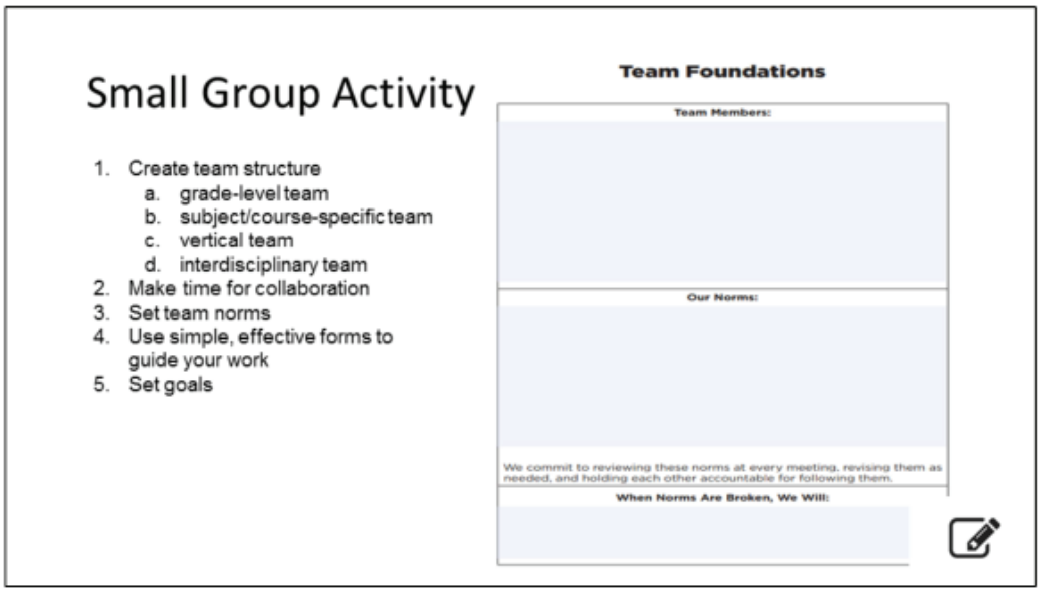
RTI (rotations) ACTION PLAN **Lesson Plans should be in Forethought
Math Objectives: part/ part whole/ ten frames/subtraction
Reading Objectives: Phonemic Awareness
Library or Computer Lab for next week? Computer lab- **Library the third week of every month.**

MODIFICATIONS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS
Special Education
ESL
GT

FINAL REFLECTION/SUMMARY OF MEETING:
Debbie came and talked to us about what curriculum/text books we use. We went over dates of upcoming events. We talked about retention and conferences coming up. It's going to get conference crazy soon. We started dividing out classes for next year. We talked about how we would rather have notes from specials teachers instead of a conference at our door after specials. We love that they are informing us about or students, but we only have 30 minutes for science and social studies and when we have a ten-minute conference then we only have 20 minutes left for instruction. We talked about starting Star testing next week and how we need all aides to help read the math portion.

QUESTIONS for Mrs. Curry and/or Mr. Foster:
1. Will there be a sped summer school class this year? If we have enough teachers. Right now we are still short 2 teachers just to fill regular classes.
2. Can we have all aides next week from 8:05-9:00 in the library lab to help read Star Math tests? Yes, thanks for the reminder this morning.
3. Do we tell parents about awards like we usually do? Yes, please.
4. Can you come and talk us Monday at conference about separating SPED We have a great idea. ;)
Yes, I'll be there.

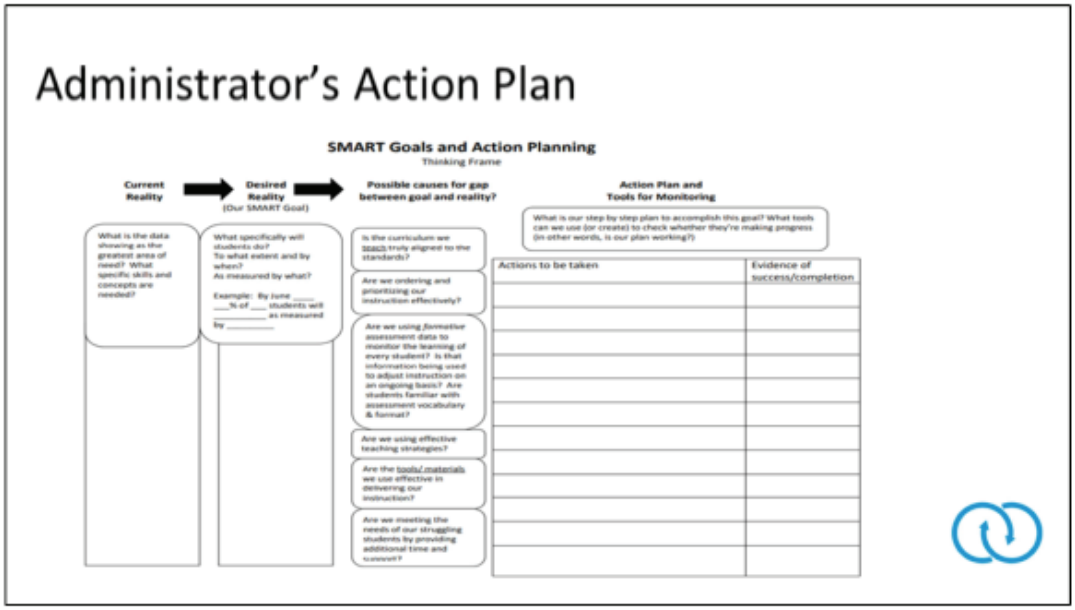
Here is another example of a PLC template and how the administrator assessed the meeting notes by providing feedback. On-going feedback from the administrator allows teachers to feel supported.



Start time 1:00
As a table group, you will develop a guiding coalition of teachers, support staff, and administrators focused on ensuring that all students learn at high levels.

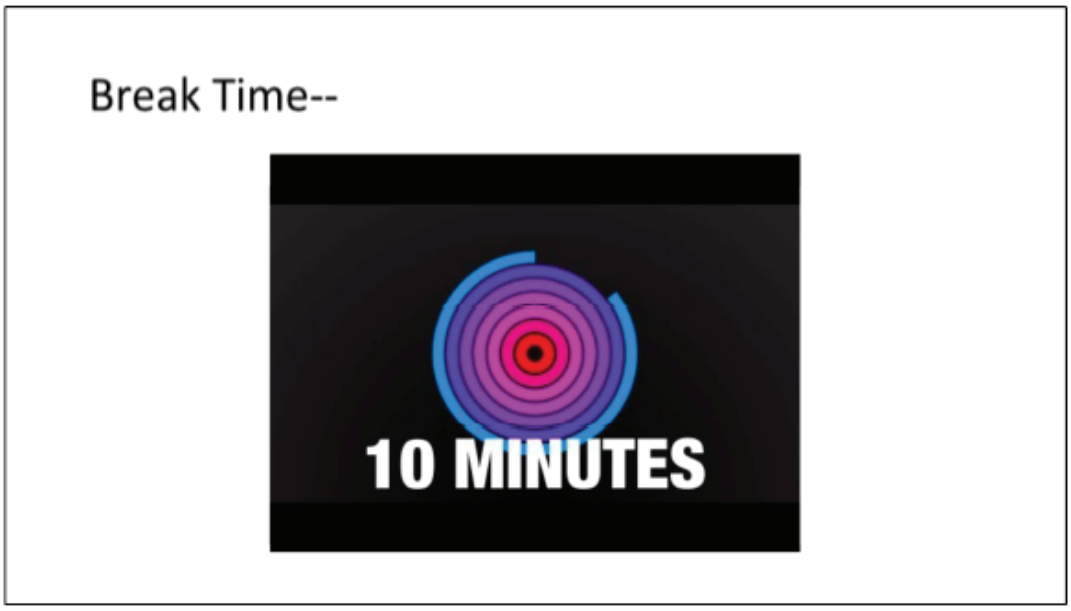
1. You will create a team structure for one of the following teams:
    a. grade-level team
    b. subject/course-specific team
    c. vertical team
    d. interdisciplinary team
2. You will design a plan to make time for collaboration so that all members of the PLC have an opportunity to meet together often.
3. Set team norms
4. Design or select a simple, effective form to guide the PLC meeting.
5. Set one SMART goal using one piece of data from Whitten Elementary's Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

Complete the Team Foundations handout for Whitten Elementary school.

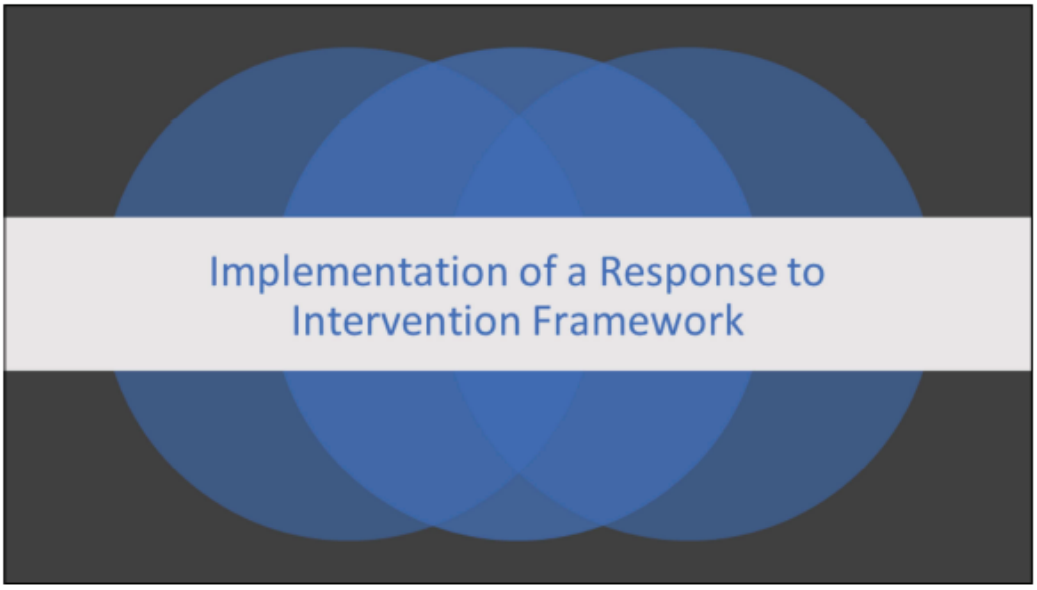


Start time 1:30

Administrators will create an Action Plan for PLC implementation or improvement for their own campus using Solution Tree's (2012) Thinking Frame.



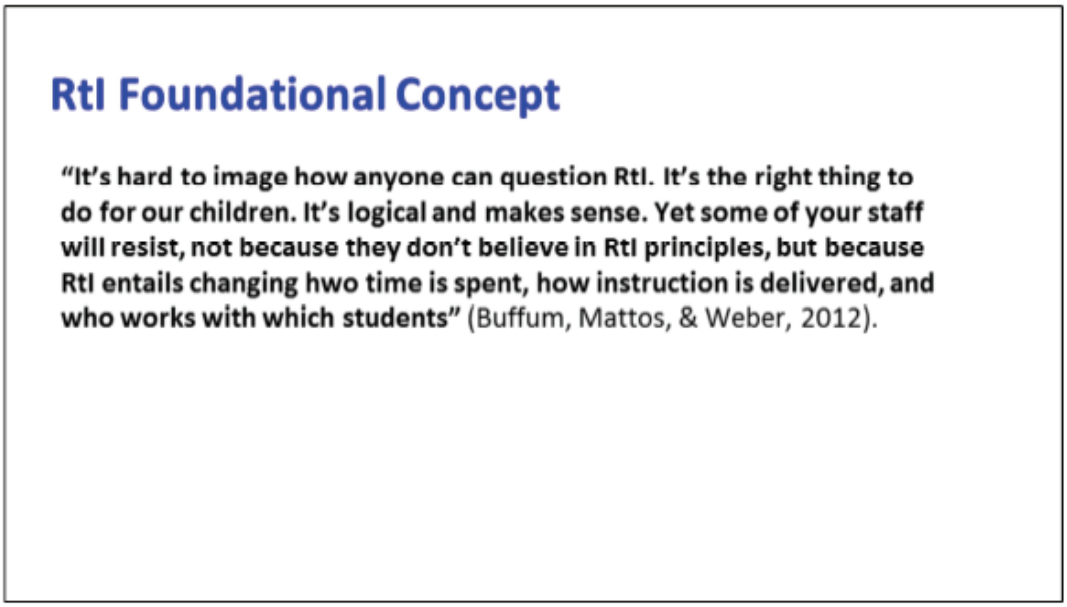
Take a break from 2:00-2:10

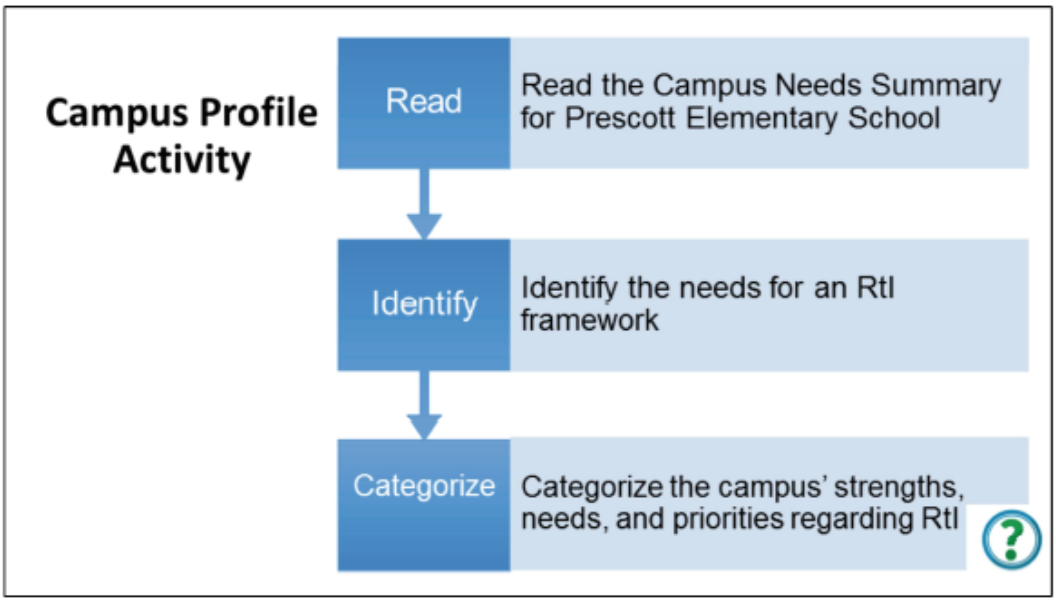


Start at 2:10

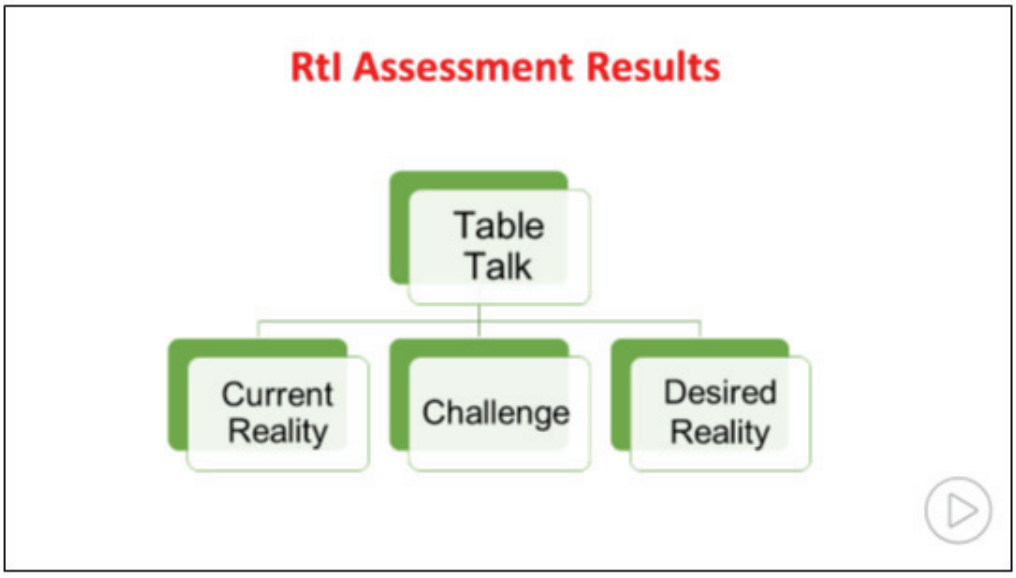
In this segment of the training, we will focus on simplifying the RtI implementation process.

Overview:	In this module simplifies the Response to Intervention process for administrators by incorporating the Eight Core Principles of RtI (Hall, 2008).
Objective:	Administrators will create a practical implementation plan that includes time for intervention in the master schedule, explore ways to collect data, and identify the role the teachers have in matching interventions with students' needs.


RtI Foundational Concept
"It's hard to image how anyone can question RtI. It's the right thing to do for our children. It's logical and makes sense. Yet some of your staff will resist, not because they don't believe in RtI principles, but because RtI entails changing hwo time is spent, how instruction is delivered, and who works with which students" (Buffum, Mattos, & Weber, 2012).



Identifying the problem



Start at 2:20

At your table, discuss each question considering evidence from the campus profile activity.

What are the strengths and needs of the district regarding Response to Intervention?

_____
_____

What evidence supports these strengths and weaknesses?

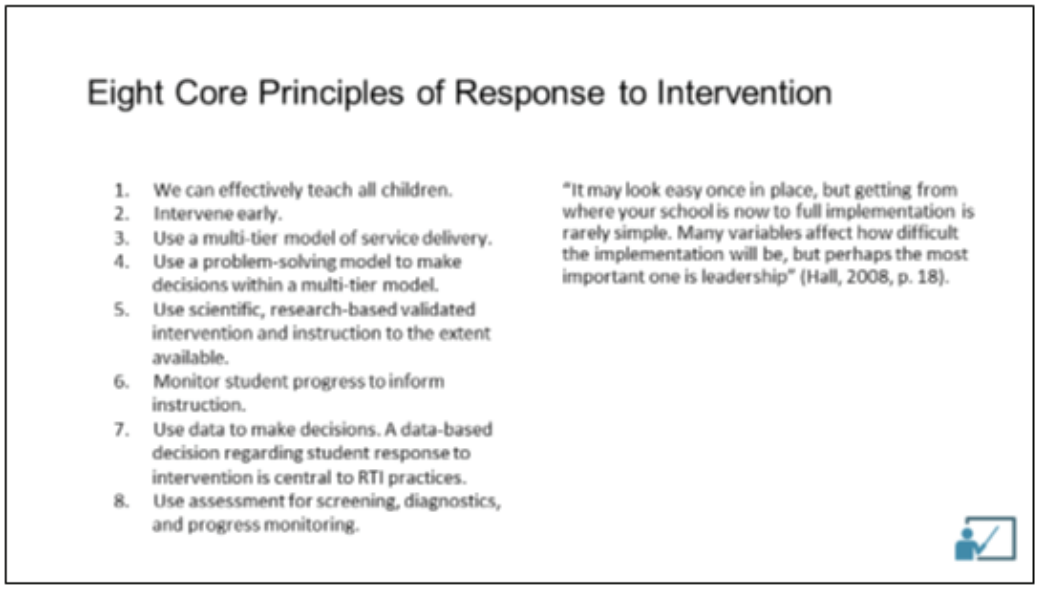
_____
_____

What are the priorities in improving RtI systems on campus?

_____
_____

What are you learning about our own district/school?

_____
_____



Start time 2:30

Review the eight core principles of RtI.

1. We can effectively teach all children.
2. Intervene early.
3. Use a multi-tier model of service delivery.
4. Use a problem-solving model to make decisions within a multi-tier model.
5. Use scientific, research-based validated intervention and instruction to the extent available.
6. Monitor student progress to inform instruction.
7. Use data to make decisions. A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RTI practices.
8. Use assessment for screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.

Read the quote to open discussion for keeping the RtI implementation process simple.

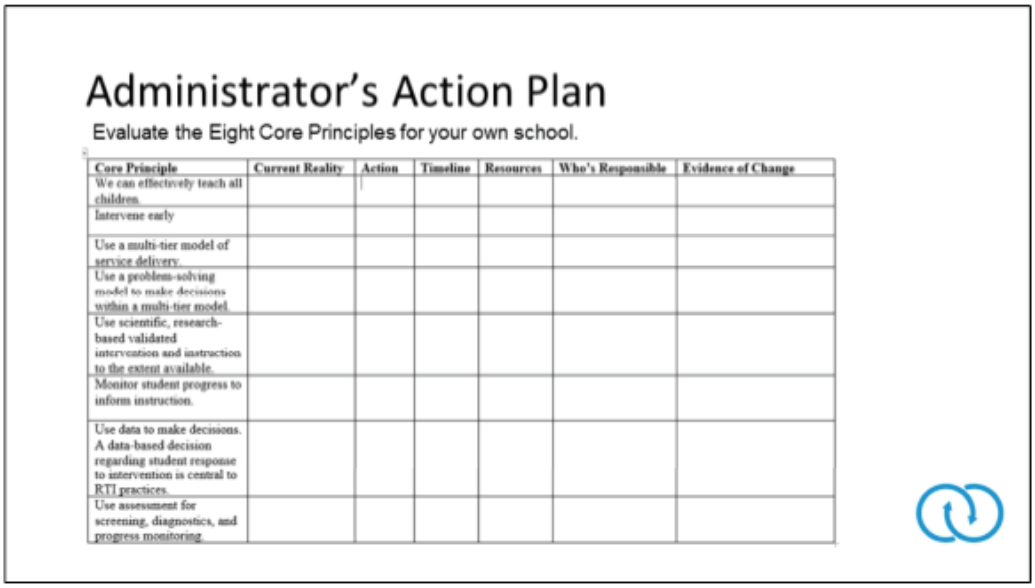
"It may look easy once in place, but getting from where your school is now to full implementation is rarely simple. Many variables affect how difficult the implementation will be, but perhaps the most important one is leadership" (Hall, 2008, p. 18).

Small Group Activity

Core Principle	Current Reality	Action	Timeline	Resources	Who's Responsible	Evidence of Change
We can effectively teach all children.						
Intervene early						
Use a multi tier model of service delivery.						
Use a problem-solving model to make decisions within a multi tier model.						
Use scientific, research-based validated intervention and instruction to the extent available.						
Monitor student progress to inform instruction.						
Use data to make decisions. A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RTI practices.						
Use assessment for screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.						

Start time 3:00

Using the Eight Core Principles Chart, evaluate Whitten Elementary's current reality in order to create an action plan for implementation of an RtI framework founded in the Eight Core Principles of Response to Intervention.



Administrator's Action Plan

Evaluate the Eight Core Principles for your own school.

Core Principle	Current Reality	Action	Timeline	Resources	Who's Responsible	Evidence of Change
We can effectively teach all children.						
Intervene early						
Use a multi-tier model of service delivery.						
Use a problem-solving model to make decisions within a multi-tier model.						
Use scientific, research-based validated intervention and instruction to the extent available.						
Monitor student progress to inform instruction.						
Use data to make decisions. A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RTI practices.						
Use assessment for screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.						

Start time 3:30-4:00

Using the Eight Core Principles Chart, evaluate the current reality of your own district or campus in order to create an action plan for implementation of an RtI framework founded in the Eight Core Principles of Response to Intervention.

Appendix C: Professional Development Presentation Handouts

Characteristics of Underperforming School Analysis

Poverty How many Economically Disadvantaged students are on your campus? In each grade-level?	State Average* 59.0%	Campus	District
Overcrowded Classrooms What is your teacher to student ratio?	Kindergarten 18.8 Grade 1 18.8 Grade 2 18.9 Grade 3 19.0 Grade 4 19.0 Grade 5 20.9 Grade 6 20.4 ELAR 16.8 Foreign Languages 18.7 Mathematics 18.0 Science 19.0 Social Studies 19.4		
Highly Trained Teachers What training is provided for your staff? How often?			
Access to technology What technology do your students have access to?			
Access to Interventions What research-based interventions are offered?			
Attendance What is your attendance rate? In each grade-level?	95.8%		
Dropout Rates What is your annual dropout rate?	2.0%		
Staff Morale Do you survey your staff often? What do you do with the feedback?			
Principal Turnover How many principals has your campus had in the last five years?			

*Data received from 2016-2017 TAPR Report

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Summary

2018-2019

Whitten Elementary is a rural elementary school in Texas that serves students in grades pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. The elementary maintains a student population of approximately 550 students. Whitten Elementary is considered to be a Title 1 school-wide campus. Kindergarten through fourth grade classes have five teachers per grade-level. There are two early childhood classes that include a Head Start and Pre K, which are both income based programs. The school currently faces issues with overcrowded classrooms, lack of community support to pass a bond for updated facilities, technology and more space for classrooms. State assessment data indicates that the campus is improving but underperforming according to state standards.

Demographics

The ethnic population of Whitten Elementary is 12 % White, 80 % Hispanic, 2.2% American Indian, and 5.8% either Multi-Racial, Asian, or African-American. The percent of students who qualify as Economically Disadvantaged is 78%. Based on the TAPR, 2016-2017 School Report Card, At Risk student criteria, and class lists, Whitten Elementary attendance rate is 96.3%. Whitten Elementary would like to achieve a 97% attendance rate. The class sizes for the upcoming 1st and 3rd grade classes for the 2018-19 school year are projected to be at least 23:1 and 22:1, which is above the state recommended 18:1 ratio. Whitten Elementary's Special Education program has a population of 12.2%, which is above the state average of 8.8%. The LEP population continues to increase with at total of 30.9% of students currently.

While the campus serves the needs of a variety of economic backgrounds, teachers and staff put a great amount of time and effort into establishing positive relationships with students and their families, but there is no social/emotional development curriculum in place or a consistent behavior plan. A strength within our Special Education population is the percentage of students coded for inclusion support instead of resource/pull-out classes. The percentage of students in the least restrictive environment is 95%. The number of students being served in our Dyslexia program has increased, and the percentage of students identified as Special Education continues to increase.

Demographics Strengths

Whitten Elementary, in the last five years, has had a steady enrollment increase of students. The campus' attendance rate has exceeded the 95% standard established by the state of Texas for the past 10 years. Whitten Elementary has a 15.6% mobility rate, which is lower than the state average of 16.2%. Teachers at Whitten Elementary, all of which are highly qualified, have an average of 13 years of experience.

Demographics Needs

- Increased time for interventions to address increase in both economically disadvantaged and LEP students.

- Increased resources for interventions and training on administering interventions, such as remedial learning and intervention programs like iStation, Headsprout, Read Naturally, LLI, Take Flight, IXL, Lexia, and Renaissance Star, etc.
- Greater cultural awareness and diversity training for all staff.
- Training and implementation of a variety of collaborative learning and differentiated instructional teaching models.
- Increased focus on successful implementation of RtI, aligned instructional approaches and progress monitoring tools.
- Increase in number of students in Head Start and PreK to prepare more incoming kindergarten students with kindergarten readiness skills.

Student Academic Achievement

Student Academic Achievement Summary

STAAR scores are improving but are still below district and campus expectations. Whitten Elementary is working to improve Special Education scores by providing a Special Education tutor for four hours a day in Reading, Writing and Math. In 3rd grade, scores are 78% passing in Reading, and 77% passing in Math. In 4th grade, scores are 71% passing for Reading, 71% passing for Math, and 67% passing in Writing.

For the 2017-2018 school year, Whitten Elementary improved in the following areas:

- 3rd grade Reading increased from 68% passing to 78% passing.
- 3rd grade Math increased from 75% passing to 77% passing.
- 4th grade Reading increased from 65% passing to 71% passing.
- 4th grade Math increased from 68% passing to 71% passing.
- 4th grade Writing increased from 64% passing to 67% passing.

Student Academic Achievement Strengths

Whitten Elementary staff works hard to ensure students are successful, but has seen little improvement in state standardized test scores. Our campus is proud of many different student achievements strengths, including:

- Met Standard on Overall Performance Indicator for STAAR tests
- Improvement in all STAAR tested subject areas

Academic Achievement Needs

- Interventions targeting all students whose performance decreased in any STAAR tested subject area.
- Increase in the number of students scoring Masters in all subject areas.
- Increased focus on data driven instructional interventions and differentiated instruction in an effort to meet student needs and improve student performance among all underperforming groups of students.
- Increased support for at-risk and economically disadvantaged students.
- Training on how to increase rigor and identify essential standards to better align curriculum and assessments vertically and horizontally across kindergarten through fourth grade.

School Processes & Programs

School Processes & Programs Summary

The quality of staff is a priority in promoting student success at all levels on Whitten Elementary's campus. Principals use a thorough application process, certification requirements, and staff input to hire the most qualified applicants. Staff members are organized into grade level teams based on their individual professional strengths and the needs of the team.

Whitten Elementary strives to meet the diverse needs of students and families they serve through a focus on Postsecondary Readiness, and a shared vision of success for all students. Shared leadership and decision making is evident through the weekly staff meetings with the administrative team that consists of the principal, assistant principal, counselor, and RtI Coordinator.Whitten Elementary uses data to improve academic achievement for all students, but there is no structure in place for professional learning communities. Teachers are not required to meet consistently to plan, analyze data, or discuss concerns with student progress.

When students are not making progress, Whitten Elementary uses ARD and 504 committees to make adjustments. All of our available technology resources are used to support remedial learning and intervention. However, the computers in the computer lab, used for interventions, are at least eleven years old and fail to run efficiently. Computer accessories, such as headphones, are outdated as well.

Administrators plan effectively to ensure that teachers can focus on instructional time without significant interference in the learning
process. Our 100% highly qualified staff works together to provide feedback related to instruction. Creation of teacher made and performance-based tests all align with STAAR standards. The campus is committed to the personal growth of each staff member.

School Processes & Programs Strengths

- Teachers set goals and appraisers give timely feedback and focus on continuous improvement.
- Staff is required to attend five days of professional development in the summer.
- The average teaching experience on campus is 13 years, which is above the state average of 10.9 years.
- Highly qualified teachers with extra certifications and degrees
- PISD IT department strives to be efficient and timely in accommodating all technology support requests.

School Processes & Programs Needs

- Increase time for teacher collaboration and on-going professional development through implementation of Professional Learning Communities.
- Implementation of consistent campus-wide behavior plan that promotes positive reinforcement.

- Increase in communication with parents, staff, and administration
- Implementation of team leaders for each grade level to meet with administration at minimum of once a month. These meetings would focus on instructional practices, analysis of data and other job embedded professional development that strengthen our staff's effectiveness and sharpen their focus on our school's vision
- Training on collective responsibility to increase culture of high expectations for all students, teachers, and staff.
- Principal effectively holding teachers and staff accountable for effective instructional and collaborative practices.

Perceptions

Perceptions Summary

Whitten Elementary continues to increase efforts to communicate with families and the community in a variety of ways. To increase
parental involvement and engagement, staff continues to identify ways to evolve home and school communication. We hold consistent routines across grade levels for communication with parents through student take-home folders, Blackboard, Remind, newsletters, and access to the Parent Portal. Whitten Elementary school's website and social media accounts are updated regularly. The PTA/volunteer programs are in place and thriving.

There are five facets for how parent and community communication is fostered on campus:
1. The Parent-Teacher Association
2. Partnerships with local churches, Visions of Sugarplums, and other civic organizations and businesses
3. Two-way communication between staff and parents (folders, phone calls, conferences, text applications, and email)
4. Parent and community volunteers in the classrooms, door greeters, and office
5. Businesses donate funds to sponsor Teacher of the Month and Staff Member of the Month

Whitten Elementary has compassion for students and families. We believe providing a positive atmosphere for students and faculty will ultimately lead to higher academic performance, but there are currently no positive behavior systems in place. In order to achieve that climate, we need a positive behavior discipline program. Communication is vital for increasing efficiency in our academic setting.

Perceptions Strengths

Whitten Elementary functions are not well-attended by families. The volunteers for Watch D.O.G.S., One Plus One Mentoring, Grandparent Program, High School Student-Organizations, and PTA are reliable and dependable. The PTA encourages parental and community involvement by hosting a Book Fair, Fine Arts day, teacher luncheons, and a talent show. The Whitten Elementary Art Program works together with Whitten High School Student-Organizations to host Fine Arts Day and the Art Show increased and improved use of social media to communicate appropriately with parents and the community. Strong and consistent support from

local churches is apparent on campus. Every student receives a free and healthy breakfast every morning. Teacher retention rates indicate a strong desire to work at Whitten ISD.

Perceptions Needs

- Teachers have low expectations for students. Increase in teacher training for higher-level of academic achievement expectations.
- Increase events that support parent involvement.
- Seek methods of communication for non-English speaking populations.

Campus Needs Assessment Summary Chart

Whitten Elementary is a rural elementary school in Texas that serves students in grades pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. The elementary maintains a student population of approximately 550 students. Whitten Elementary is considered to be a Title 1 school-wide campus. Kindergarten through fourth grade classes have five teachers per grade-level. There are two early childhood classes that include a Head Start and Pre K, which are both income based programs. The school currently faces issues with overcrowded classrooms, lack of community support to pass a bond for updated facilities, technology and more space for classrooms. State assessment data indicates that the campus is improving but underperforming according to state standards.

Improvement Planning Data
- District goals
- Campus goals
- Current and/or prior year(s) campus and/or district improvement plans
- Campus and/or district planning and decision making committee(s) meeting data
- State and federal planning requirements

Accountability Data
- Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) data
- Domain 1 - Student Achievement
- Domain 2 - Student Progress
- Domain 3 - Closing the Gaps
- System Safeguards and Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS) data
- Critical Success Factor(s) data
- Accountability Distinction Designations
- Federal Report Card Data
- PBMAS data

Student Data: Assessments
- State and federally required assessment information (e.g. curriculum, eligibility, format, standards, accommodations, TEA information)
- State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) current and longitudinal results, including all versions
- STAAR EL Progress Measure data
- Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) results
- Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), Tejas LEE, or other alternate early reading assessment results

Student Data: Student Groups
- Race and ethnicity data
- Special education population
- Section 504 data
- Homeless data
- Gifted and talented data
- Dyslexia Data
- Response to Intervention (RtI) student achievement data

Student Data: Behavior and Other Indicators
- Attendance data
- Mobility rate, including longitudinal data
- Discipline records
- Violence and/or violence prevention records
- School safety data

Employee Data
- Professional learning communities (PLC) data
- Staff surveys and/or other feedback
- State certified and high quality staff data
- Teacher/Student Ratio
- Campus leadership data
- Campus department and/or faculty meeting discussions and data
- Professional development needs assessment data
- T-TESS

Parent/Community Data
- Parent surveys and/or other feedback
- Community surveys and/or other feedback

Support Systems and Other Data
- Organizational structure data
- Budgets/entitlements and expenditures data
- Study of best practices
- Other additional data

Multiple Measures of Data Analysis	Summary of Strengths	Summary of Needs	Priorities
Demographics			
Student Academic Achievement			
School Processes and Programs			
Perceptions			

Getting Started With RTI

This activity is designed to help a school leadership team and/or teacher team assess the school's current reality on the essential elements of an effective RTI program, set a long-term vision, and identify specific steps to achieve the school's goals.

	Guiding Questions	Our Current Reality	Desired Reality	Next Steps
Collective Responsibility	Do we believe all students can learn at high levels? Will we take responsibility to make this a reality?			
Creating Teacher Teams	Do we have frequent (weekly) collaborative time embedded during our professional day? Is every teacher part of a collaborative team? Are our teacher teams formed around shared student learning outcomes? Have we identified team norms? Do we hold each other accountable for following norms?			
Creating Schoolwide Teams	Have we created a school leadership team? Is there representation of every teacher team on the leadership team? Have we created a school intervention team? Do our schoolwide teams meet frequently? Have our schoolwide teams identified norms? Do members hold each other accountable for following norms?			

page 1 of 2

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	Guiding Questions	Our Current Reality	Desired Reality	Next Steps
Concentrated Instruction	Have we clearly defined the essential learning outcomes that our students must master for success in the next course/grade level? Do all students have access to grade-level essential standards?			
Convergent Assessment	Have we created common assessments that measure student mastery of each essential standard? Do we compare results to identify the most effective teaching strategies? Do we use this information to guide our interventions?			
Certain Access	Do we have frequent time, during the school day, to reteach and enrich students? Do we have a process to frequently identify students for additional time and support?			

Critical Issues for Team Consideration

Team Name:

Team Members:

Use the following rating scale to indicate the extent to which each statement is true of your team.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not True of Our Team **Our Team Is Addressing This** **True of Our Team**

1. _____ We have identified team norms and protocols to guide us in working together.
2. _____ We have analyzed student achievement data and established SMART goals to improve upon this level of achievement we are working interdependently to attain. (SMART Goals are Strategic, Measurable, Attainable, Results oriented, and Time bound. SMART Goals are discussed at length in chapter 6.)
3. _____ Each member of our team is clear on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions (that is, the essential learning) that students will acquire as a result of (1) our course or grade level and (2) each unit within the course or grade level.
4. _____ We have aligned the essential learning with state and district standards and the high-stakes assessments required of our students.
5. _____ We have identified course content and topics we can eliminate to devote more time to the essential curriculum.
6. _____ We have agreed on how to best sequence the content of the course and have established pacing guides to help students achieve the intended essential learning.
7. _____ We have identified the prerequisite knowledge and skills students need in order to master the essential learning of each unit of instruction.
8. _____ We have identified strategies and created instruments to assess whether students have the prerequisite knowledge and skills.
9. _____ We have developed strategies and systems to assist students in acquiring prerequisite knowledge and skills when they are lacking in those areas.
10. _____ We have developed frequent common formative assessments that help us determine each student's mastery of essential learning.

11. ____ We have established the proficiency standard we want each student to achieve on each skill and concept examined with our common assessments.

12. ____ We use the results of our common assessments to assist each other in building on strengths and addressing weaknesses as part of an ongoing process of continuous improvement designed to help students achieve at higher levels.

13. ____ We use the results of our common assessments to identify students who need additional time and support to master essential learning, and we work within the systems and processes of the school to ensure they receive that support.

14. ____ We have agreed on the criteria we will use in judging the quality of student work related to the essential learning of our course, and we continually practice applying those criteria to ensure we are consistent.

15. ____ We have taught students the criteria we will use in judging the quality of their work and provided them with examples.

16. ____ We have developed or utilized common summative assessments that help us assess the strengths and weaknesses of our program.

17. ____ We have established the proficiency standard we want each student to achieve on each skill and concept examined with our summative assessments.

18. ____ We formally evaluate our adherence to team norms and the effectiveness of our team at least twice each year.

REPRODUCIBLE | 43

Team Foundations

Team Members:
Our Norms:
We commit to reviewing these norms at every meeting, revising them as needed, and holding each other accountable for following them.
When Norms Are Broken, We Will:

Our Meeting Schedule:

Date: Time: Place:

Teams work toward common goals. Our goals to improve student learning are:

Specific **M**easurable **A**ttainable **R**esults-oriented **T**ime-bound

REPRODUCIBLE | 43

Team Foundations

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Eight Core Principles of Response to Intervention

Core Principle	Current Reality	Action	Timeline	Resources	Who's Responsible	Evidence of Change
We can effectively teach all children.						
Intervene early						
Use a multi-tier model of service delivery.						
Use a problem-solving model to make decisions within a multi-tier model.						
Use scientific, research-based validated intervention and instruction to the extent available.						
Monitor student progress to inform instruction.						
Use data to make decisions. A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RTI practices.						
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Use assessment for screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.						

SMART Goals and Action Planning

Thinking Frame

Current Reality → **Desired Reality** (Our SMART Goal) → **Possible causes for gap between goal and reality?**

Action Plan and Tools for Monitoring

What is the data showing as the greatest area of need? What specific skills and concepts are needed?

What specifically will students do?
To what extent and by when?
As measured by what?

Example: By June ____ ___% of ___ students will _____ as measured by _____

Is the curriculum we teach truly aligned to the standards?

Are we ordering and prioritizing our instruction effectively?

Are we using *formative* assessment data to monitor the learning of every student? Is that information being used to adjust instruction on an ongoing basis? Are students familiar with assessment vocabulary & format?

Are we using effective teaching strategies?

Are the tools/ materials we use effective in delivering our instruction?

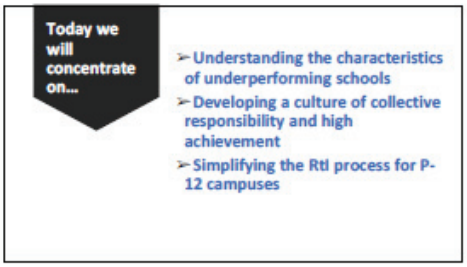
Are we meeting the needs of our struggling students by providing additional time and support?

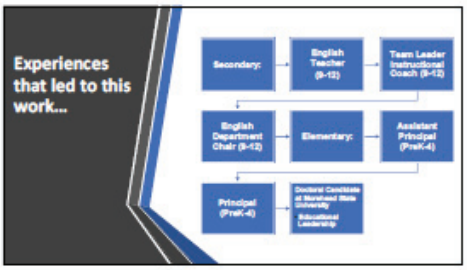
What is our step by step plan to accomplish this goal? What tools can we use (or create) to check whether they're making progress (in other words, is our plan working?)

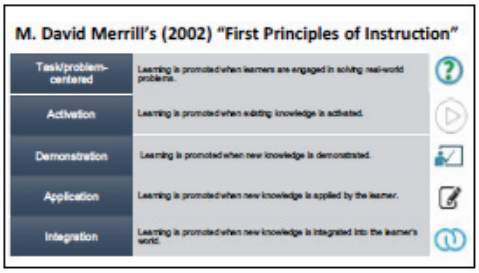
Actions to be taken	Evidence of success/completion

Appendix D: Professional Development Student Notes

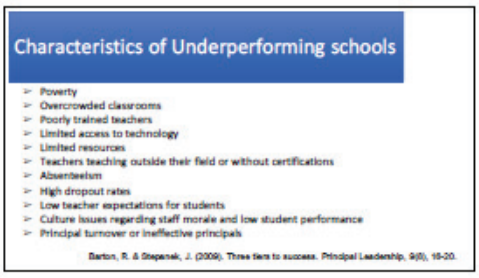

A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES FOR NEW ADMINISTRATORS IN UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS
By: Danielle Curry


Today we will concentrate on...
Understanding the characteristics of underperforming schools
Developing a culture of collective responsibility and high achievement
Simplifying the RtI process for P-12 campuses


Experiences that led to this work...
Secondary:
English Teacher (9-12)
Team Leader Instructional Coach (9-12)
English Department Chair (9-12)
Elementary:
Assistant Principal (PreK-4)
Principal (PreK-4)
Doctoral Candidate at Morehead State University Educational Leadership


M. David Merrill's (2002) "First Principles of Instruction"
Task/problem-centered
Learning is promoted when learners are engaged in solving real-world problems.
Activation
Learning is promoted when existing knowledge is activated.
Demonstration
Learning is promoted when new knowledge is demonstrated.
Application
Learning is promoted when new knowledge is applied by the learner.
Integration
Learning is promoted when new knowledge is integrated into the learner's world.


Understanding the Characteristics of Underperforming Schools


Characteristics of Underperforming schools
Poverty
Overcrowded classrooms
Poorly trained teachers
Limited access to technology
Limited resources
Teachers teaching outside their field or without certifications
Absenteeism
High dropout rates
Low teacher expectations for students
Culture issues regarding staff morale and low student performance
Principal turnover or ineffective principals
Barton, R. & Stepanek, J. (2009). Three tiers to success. Principal Leadership, 9(8), 18-20.

LOCATE YOUR TAPR REPORT
1. TEA Website
2. 2016-2017
3. Search by campus
4. Enter campus name

Activity: Characteristics of Underperforming Schools

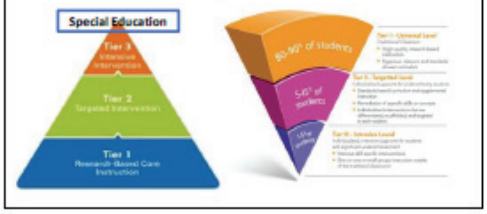
Characteristics	State Average	Campus	District
Poverty			
Overcrowded Classrooms			
Highly Trained Teachers			
Access to technology			
Access to interventions			
Attendance			
Dropout rates			
Staff morale			
Principal turnover			

Year One Campus Profile:

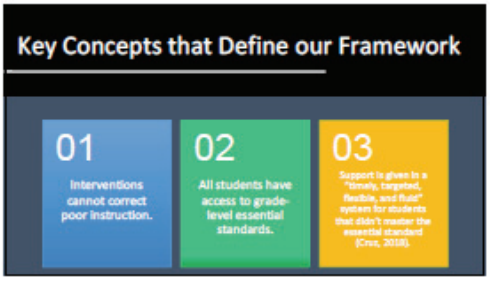
Debrief: Describe what you identified as characteristics of an underperforming school on your chart. Each group will share one category.

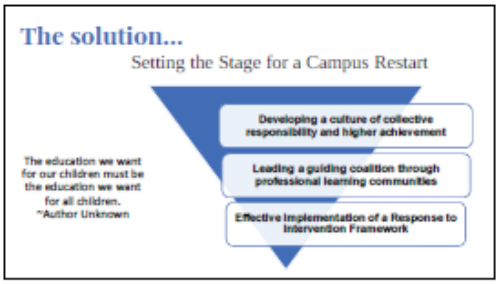
- Below state average STAAR scores in 4th grade Math and Writing
- No PLC structure in place
- No aligned curriculum and/or assessments (horizontally or vertically)
- RtI was used to place students in Special Education
- 11% Special Education population (State average=8%)
- No leadership team/capacity building framework
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment was completed by one person
- Master schedule did not maximize instruction
- No discipline plan or positive behavior system in place

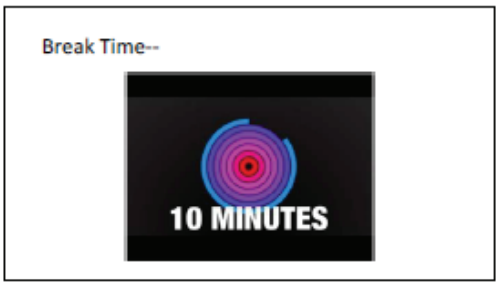
Barriers to Change



Key Concepts that Define our Framework




The solution...
Setting the Stage for a Campus Restart
The education we want for our children must be the education we want for all children.
~Author Unknown
Developing a culture of collective responsibility and higher achievement
Leading a guiding coalition through professional learning communities
Effective implementation of a Response to Intervention Framework


Break Time--
10 MINUTES


Developing a Culture of Collective Responsibility and High Achievement

Overview: The purpose of this module is to provide administrators with a process for identifying the campus' current strengths, areas of improvement, and the strategies for cultivating a culture of high expectations for students and staff in order to turnaround their underperforming school.

Objective: Administrators will create a schoolwide process focused on high achievement

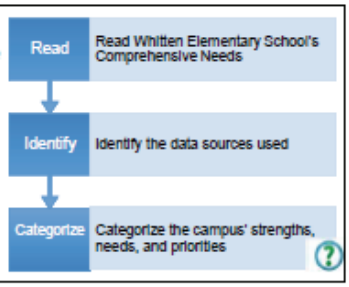
Definitions

Collective Responsibility: "A shared belief that the primary responsibility of **each member** of the organization is to ensure high levels of learning for **every child**" (Buffum, Mattos, & Weber, 2012, p. 9).

Underperforming School: "Underperforming schools are often staffed by teachers and administrators who, with the best of intentions, have low expectations for the academic achievement of their students" (Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, A. (2008).

5 Step Process: The systematic approach to conducting a comprehensive needs assessment as part of the planning and decision-making process toward higher achievement.

Campus Profile Activity



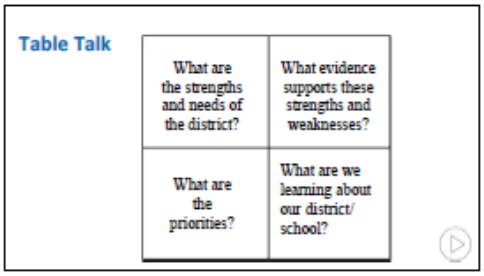
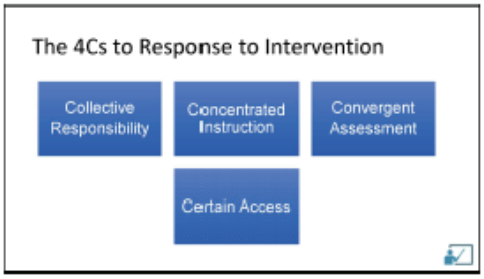
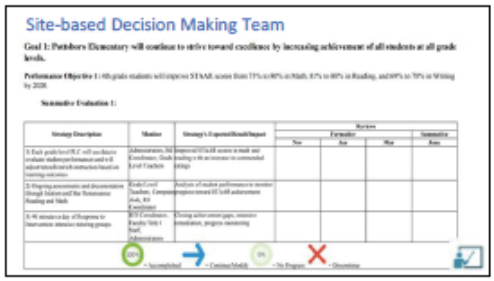
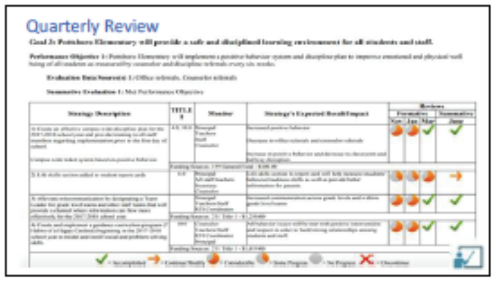


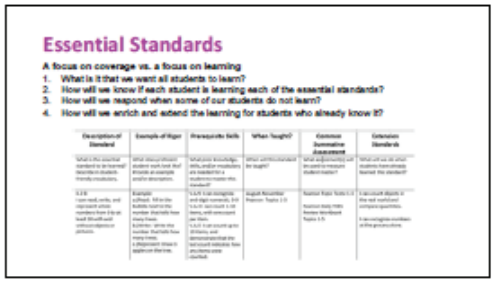
Table Talk
What are the strengths and needs of the district?
What evidence supports these strengths and weaknesses?
What are the priorities?
What are we learning about our district/ school?

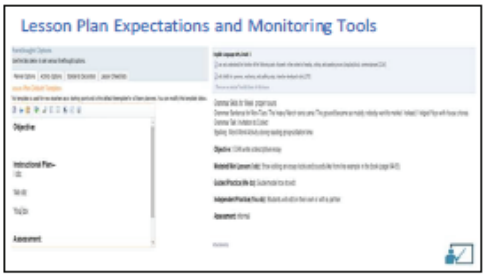

The 4Cs to Response to Intervention
Collective Responsibility
Concentrated Instruction
Convergent Assessment
Certain Access

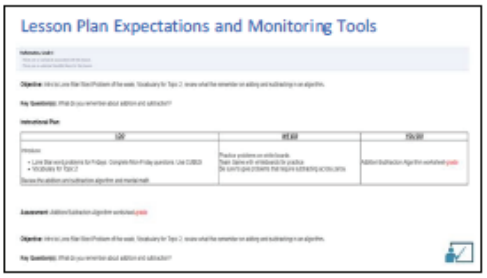

Process for Expectations and Accountability
Site-based Decision Making Team
Quarterly Review
Lesson Plans
Syllabus
Data Meetings
Leadership Team
On-going Professional Development

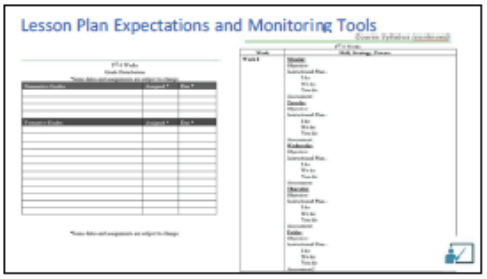

Site-based Decision Making Team

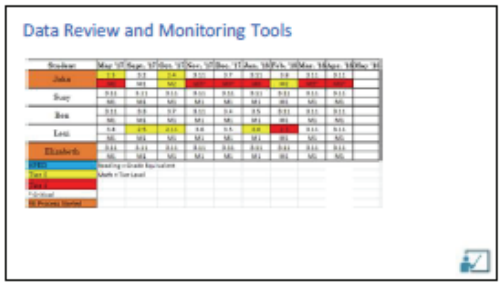

Quarterly Review

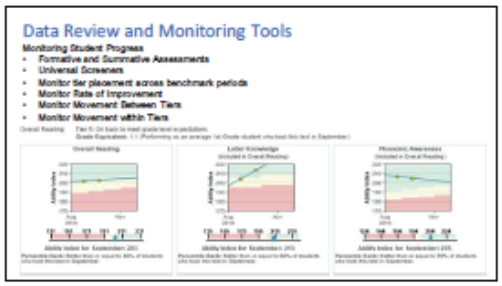

Essential Standards
A focus on coverage vs. a focus on learning
1. What is it that we want all students to learn?
2. How will we know if each student is learning each of the essential standards?
3. How will we respond when some of our students do not learn?
4. How will we enrich and extend the learning for students who already know it?

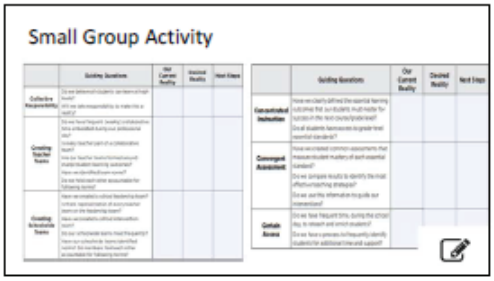

Lesson Plan Expectations and Monitoring Tools


Lesson Plan Expectations and Monitoring Tools

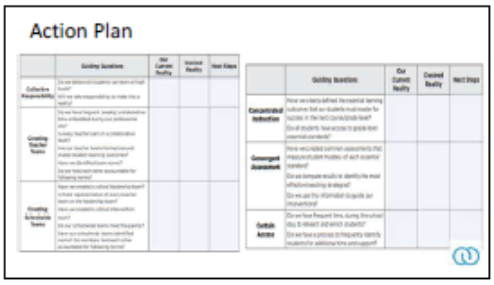

Lesson Plan Expectations and Monitoring Tools


Data Review and Monitoring Tools

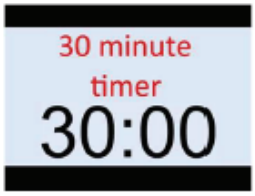

Data Review and Monitoring Tools
Monitoring Student Progress
Formative and Summative Assessments
Universal Screeners
Monitor tier placement across benchmark periods
Monitor Rate of Improvement
Monitor Movement Between Tiers
Monitor Movement within Tiers


Small Group Activity


10 min
4Cs to Campus Improvement Activity

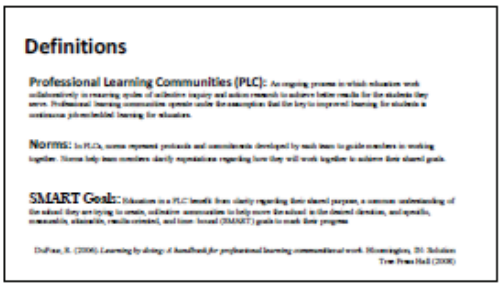

Action Plan

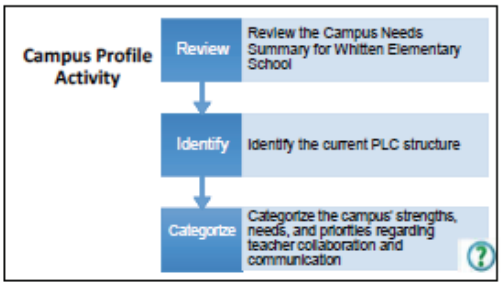
Lunch Time--

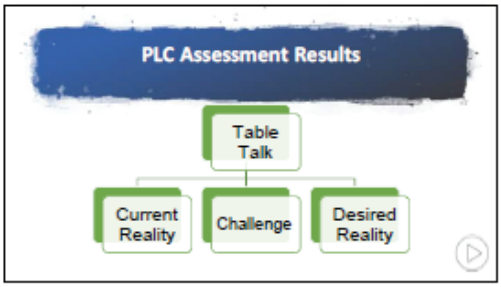


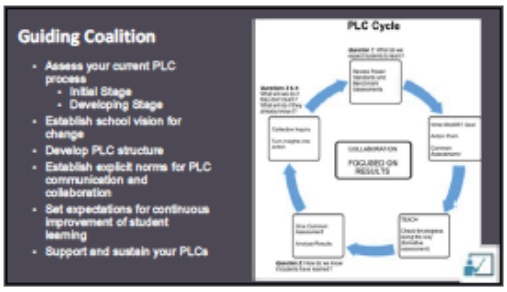
Overview: In this module, principals will develop their skills in taking an "all hands-on deck" approach to creating an environment of collective responsibility and accountability for supporting students and creating change towards higher student achievement.

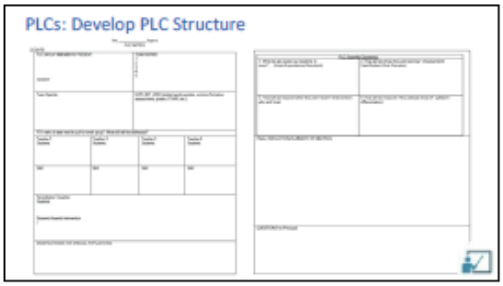
Objective: Administrators will develop a guiding coalition of teachers, support staff, and administrators focused on ensuring that all students learn at high levels.


Definitions
Professional Learning Communities (PLC):
Norms:
SMART Goals:


Campus Profile Activity
Review
Review the Campus Needs Summary for Whitten Elementary School
Identify
Identify the current PLC structure
Categorize
Categorize the campus' strengths, needs, and priorities regarding teacher collaboration and communication


PLC Assessment Results
Table Talk
Current Reality
Challenge
Desired Reality


Guiding Coalition
Assess your current PLC process
Initial Stage
Developing Stage
Establish school vision for change
Develop PLC structure
Establish explicit norms for PLC communication and collaboration
Set expectations for continuous improvement of student learning
Support and sustain your PLCs
PLC Cycle
COLLABORATION
FOCUSED ON
RESULTS


PLCs: Develop PLC Structure

Small Group Activity

1. Create team structure
   a. grade-level team
   b. subject/course-specific team
   c. vertical team
   d. interdisciplinary team
2. Make time for collaboration
3. Set team norms
4. Use simple, effective forms to guide your work
5. Set goals

Administrator's Action Plan

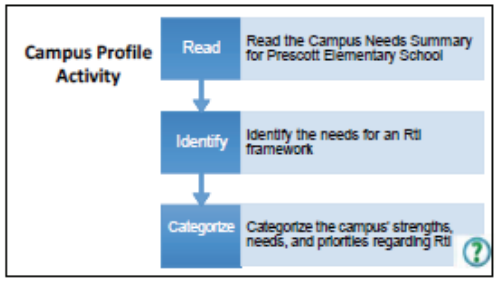
Break Time--

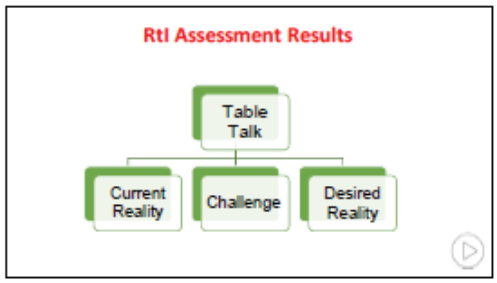
Overview: In this module simplifies the Response to Intervention process for administrators by incorporating the Eight Core Principles of RtI (Hall, 2008).

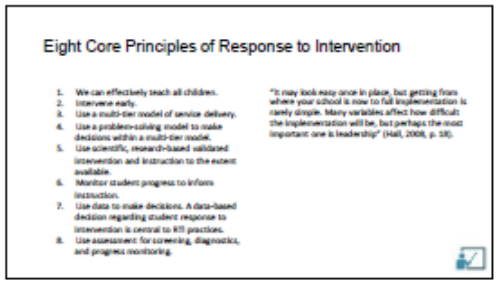
Objective: Administrators will create a practical implementation plan that includes time for intervention in the master schedule, explore ways to collect data, and identify the role the teachers have in matching interventions with students' needs.

RtI Foundational Concept

"It's hard to image how anyone can question RtI. It's the right thing to do for our children. It's logical and makes sense. Yet some of your staff will resist, not because they don't believe in RtI principles, but because RtI entails changing hwo time is spent, how instruction is delivered, and who works with which students" (Buffum, Mattos, & Weber, 2012).


Campus Profile Activity
Read
Read the Campus Needs Summary for Prescott Elementary School
Identify
Identify the needs for an RtI framework
Categorize
Categorize the campus' strengths, needs, and priorities regarding RtI


RtI Assessment Results
Table Talk
Current Reality
Challenge
Desired Reality


Eight Core Principles of Response to Intervention
1. We can effectively teach all children.
2. Intervene early.
3. Use a multi-tier model of service delivery.
4. Use a problem-solving model to make decisions within a multi-tier model.
5. Use scientific, research-based validated intervention and instruction to the extent available.
6. Monitor student progress to inform instruction.
7. Use data to make decisions. A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RTI practices.
8. Use assessment for screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.
"It may look easy once in place, but getting from where your school is now to full implementation is rarely simple. Many variables affect how difficult the implementation will be, but perhaps the most important one is leadership" (Hall, 2008, p. 18).

Small Group Activity

Core Principle	Current Reality	Action	Timeline	Resources	Who's Responsible	Evidence of Change
We can effectively reach all children						
Intervene early						
Use a multi-tier model of service delivery						
Use a problem-solving model to make decisions within a multi-tier model						
Use scientific, research-based validated interventions and instruction to the extent available						
Monitor student progress to inform instruction						
Use data to make decisions. A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RTI practices.						
Use assessment for screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring						

Administrator's Action Plan

Evaluate the Eight Core Principles for your own school.

Core Principle	Current Reality	Action	Timeline	Resources	Who's Responsible	Evidence of Change
We can effectively reach all children						
Intervene early						
Use a multi-tier model of service delivery						
Use a problem-solving model to make decisions within a multi-tier model						
Use scientific, research-based validated interventions and instruction to the extent available						
Monitor student progress to inform instruction						
Use data to make decisions. A data-based decision regarding student response to intervention is central to RTI practices.						
Use assessment for screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring						

Capstone References

Bailey, K. (2009). Solutions: Your guide to high-achieving classrooms. Retrieved from https://solutiontree.s3.amazonaws.com/solutiontree.com/media/pdf/catalogs/018SpringComp.pdf

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N. (2006). Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS). Retrieved from http://www.nasdse.org/Projects/MultiTierSystemofSupportsMTSS/tabid/411/Default.aspx

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VITA

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May 2008	Bachelor of Arts Texas A&M University-Commerce Commerce, Texas
May 2013	Master of Education Texas A&M University-Commerce Commerce, Texas
May 2019	Doctor of Education Morehead State University Morehead, Kentucky

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

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2015-2017	Elementary Assistant Principal Pottsboro Independent School District Pottsboro, Texas
2008-2015	English Teacher McKinney Boyd High School McKinney Independent School District McKinney, Texas

HONORS

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PUBLICATIONS

Curry, J.H. & Curry, D.M. TechTrends (2018). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-018-0333-2